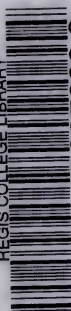


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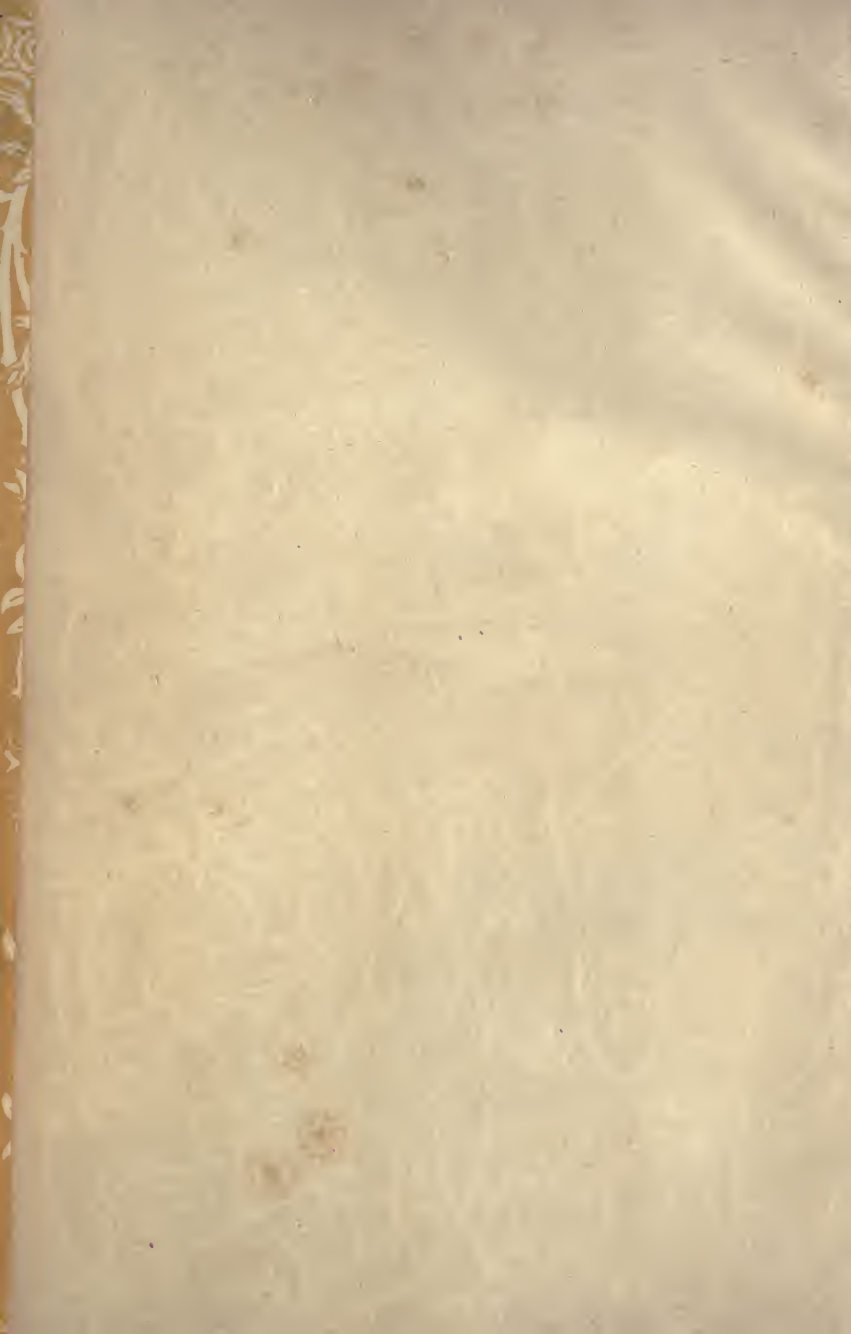
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# CALVARY THROUGH THE MASS









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TO CALVARY  
THROUGH THE MASS

BY THE REV.  
ERIC WILLIAM LESLIE, S.J.



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## PREFACE

SO much has been and is now written about the Mass that I should never have written these lectures but for obedience. And for this reason I hope for a blessing on them, and that they may help souls. The order to write came in this way: Early in the sixties I was working in my first mission—Glasgow. The work was delightful. We had a large congregation of some eleven thousand poor Irish, full of faith, warm-hearted, and intelligent. We lived in the midst of them and for them—we, that is three Fathers. Every now and then my health began to fail, and my Superior, Father Henry Thompson of blessed memory,<sup>1</sup> would say to

<sup>1</sup> I have said Father Henry Thompson of *blessed memory*, and I may mention one or two facts about him. In the sixties, Brother Augustus Law, who became so devoted a missionary and died in South Africa, was teaching at our college in Glasgow. These two holy men, Father Thompson and Brother Law, confided in one another. The latter told me that Father Thompson had said to him that if a bill came in, say of £5, and he had no money to pay it, he

me : "You are unwell and tired out ; I have arranged for you to go to Huntly Burn."

Huntly Burn is a charming place on the Abbotsford estate, almost under the shadow of the Eildon Hills. The house was then inhabited by Lord and Lady Henry Kerr. Lady Henry's brother, Hope Scott, was at Abbotsford when business allowed him. I never can forget the more than kindness which I received from these good friends. They were glad to have Mass in their chapel and I hoped that my visits were not

would take the hundredth part of it (one shilling), kneel before the tabernacle and say : "O Lord, I will give this to the first poor person who comes, and You have promised me the hundredfold !" He always got it before night. He died of blood-poisoning, caught, it was believed, from constantly breathing the unwholesome atmosphere in the houses of the poor. After his death some of the chief men in the congregation began to beg for contributions towards a *Pietà*, as a memorial of him. He used to say that he would like to get a *Pietà* into the church for the grannies to gather round and pray. Mr. Guibara—two of whose sons entered the Society—was begging for this object, and was told that a Catholic family lived in a certain cellar. He went in and found a poor tailor ill and lying on straw, his wife and children standing about him. There could be no thought of begging here—and then it turned out that the people were Protestants. I need not say that Glasgow is a very bigotted town. Mr. Guibara apologized for coming, saying : "We are collecting money to get up a memorial of one of our Fathers who died lately." The tailor asked who the Father was, and when he heard it was Father Thompson, he said, "If it's for that man, here's a shilling !"



intrusions or too frequent. I had nothing to talk about but my work at Glasgow, and one day I was lamenting how our poor people, lately come over from Ireland, in new circumstances, in a strange country, got careless about going to Mass. The next time I was at Huntly Burn, Lady Henry had the servants summoned to the drawing-room for me to say to them what I had said to her about Mass ; and I was to be asked questions if any one did not understand. Soon after this, Father Whitty, then Superior over the Jesuits in Scotland, told me to write down what I had said at Huntly Burn, so that it might be printed. I urged that I had no time, and that if I did write I should want to write more than I had said. He then said : "Give lectures on the Mass on the Sunday evenings in Lent, and the thing will be done." I gave the lectures, but they were too roughly written out at that time for printing. I was glad to see the poor people appeared to be interested in them.

But I wanted to be able to say one thing, which I felt convinced was true, and yet I could not get an authority for it : namely, that the offering from the Sacred Heart at Mass was one and the same with the offering which our Lord made on the Cross. Having got very ill, I was sent to Ireland for a fortnight. The first

thing I did there was to consult Father Edmund O'Reilly, then Provincial, and one of the greatest theologians of his day. The question I asked was: "Can I say that the act of our Lord's mind, by which He offers Himself at Mass is one and the same act as that by which He offered Himself on the Cross?" Father O'Reilly answered: "I don't think you can."

However, in 1870, Father Franzelin's theological lectures were printed. I did not see them for some years later, but in them I found what I wanted.<sup>1</sup>

The main thought which I hope to bring out in these lectures is the *idea of sacrifice*; for it seems to me that although converts are clear in their belief of the Real Presence of our Lord on the altar, that some do not grasp the idea of His offering Himself as a victim. Some, too, who have always been Catholics, do not realize this act of offering from the Sacred Heart. When we understand that our Lord is on the altar as our victim, with our sins put upon Him, and that He is offering Himself to the Eternal Father for us, surely this thought more than anything else makes the sacrifice real and living to us, and moves us to offer ourselves

<sup>1</sup> See Lecture V.

up with Him, to suffer what we can for Him who suffered and died for us.

I hope that the lectures on the plan of our Redemption and on the sacrifices of the Old Law will help to bring out these ideas. The sacrifices of the Jewish Church did not interfere with the Sacrifice of Calvary, but helped those who offered them to reach forward to the Great Sacrifice. The Old Law is fulfilled in the new and perfect sacrifice offered in memory of our Lord, and still more powerfully reaches back to the Sacrifice of the Cross.

E. W. L.

III, MOUNT STREET, W.

*August, 1897.*



# CONTENTS

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	PAGE
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	II
LECTURE I	
SACRIFICE IS NECESSARY . . . . .	23
LECTURE II	
SACRIFICE FOR SIN . . . . .	39
LECTURE III	
SACRIFICES OF THE OLD LAW . . . . .	55
LECTURE IV	
THE SACRIFICE OF THE PASCHAL LAMB AND OF THE MASS . . . . .	73
LECTURE V	
DIFFICULTIES ANSWERED—THE NEW SACRIFICE .	92
LECTURE VI	
ENTERING INTO THE SACRIFICE—THANKSGIVING .	114
LECTURE VII	
HOLY COMMUNION . . . . .	129





# TO CALVARY THROUGH THE MASS

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## INTRODUCTION

**W**E may as well know something of the place where these lectures on the Mass are to be given, of Father Eskdale, who is to give them, and, again, something of those to whom they are directed.

The lectures, then, are to be given in Eskworth, a town, as the name implies, on the river Esk. There are several rivers named Esk; the reader may choose the one he likes best. Eskworth used to be a place of some little importance in old coaching days; now it has grown into a big town. It has its railway station, and as you get near you see factory chimneys and gasometers. There is a fine old parish church, rather damaged by restoration, a Maison Dieu, and some remains

of an abbey. There are also a market-place, town hall, police station, and several dissenting chapels. But what interests us most is the Catholic church, standing in a modest, retired street, originally built in last-century architecture, but lately turned into a basilica. Adjoining it are the priest's house and garden.

Father Eskdale is the youngest son of Sir John Eskdale, a baronet to whom most of Eskworth belongs. The family house is a few miles off, in a grand park, through which the river Esk flows. The Eskdales are an old county family, and were Catholics till a few generations back.

In times of persecution they had kept their religion quiet—in fact, too quiet—till, by a mixed marriage, the old faith was lost. However, the elder branch of the family had always stuck to the old religion, and by them the Catholic church at Eskworth had been built and endowed. Until lately one member of this branch had for many years been priest there.

Sir John and Lady Eskdale are much respected. They have four sons and four daughters; the boys, of course, were educated at Eton, and as it was hoped that the youngest, Edward, would do for a family living, he, like his eldest brother, was entered at Christ Church, Oxford. After his first term he spent part of the long vacation in

Ireland, and then went to read with a tutor in the Tyrol. From what he saw in both these countries, he was much drawn to the Catholic religion, and when he returned to Oxford he began to read Catholic books. As might have been expected, he soon went to a priest, and was received into the Church. His parents were so displeased and pained at this, and so much afraid that others of the family might follow his example, that he was not allowed to return home. In a short time he joined a religious order, and when he had gone through his novitiate and studies, and had been ordained, he was chiefly employed in giving missions.

But after some years his health broke down, and the doctor prescribed rest and his native air. Just at this time he heard that his father's health was failing, in consequence of which the whole family had gone abroad. His superior, therefore, wrote to the priest at Eskworth, and asked if he could allow Father Eskdale to stay with him for a few weeks, explaining at the same time why he asked this favour and saying that Father Russell would have to restrain the zeal of his guest, and not allow him to do any hard work.

So it was that Father Eskdale arrived at the presbytery one Saturday afternoon in September, just in time to sit down to dinner with Father

Russell ; and in a few minutes they were good friends.

After a day's rest he went to see his old nurse, Nanny Bold, a widow, living in a snug cottage in the park. How she rejoiced to see "Master Ned"! She could tell him—for she had been born on the property, and her parents before her—many things he had never known. At the Hall she took him to a little room which had been called the chapel when she was a girl, but which was now crammed with boxes. Nanny was of the religion of the family ; still, she said she knew that England was once Catholic and believed that it would be Catholic again—and "Master Ned" could not be wrong.

Then he paid a visit to Tom Harvey, the game-keeper, and soon had a gun in his hand. Tom Harvey said the coveys wanted thinning, and was proud to find Master Ned as good a shot as ever, and certainly partridge-shooting agreed with Father Eskdale.

Another day he went trout-fishing in the Esk, and managed to land a fine salmon ; so that Father Russell declared that his guest cost him nothing.

But in a short time Father Eskdale said that he was getting impatient for work, and his host told him that he had a piece of work for him to do.

"It's a sad story," he began. "You remember George Bold, the son of your old nurse?"

"Yes," replied Father Eskdale; "he is about my age, and as a boy I used to play and fish with him."

"Well," the other continued, "from the time when your relative, Father Eskdale, was priest here, the children of our poor-school have had every year a picnic in the park. Two years ago they went for their picnic under the care of Kathleen O'Gorman, the schoolmistress. Kathleen's parents came to Eskworth soon after the terrible potato-rot in Ireland. They were utterly destitute and crushed; but the Irish all agreed that they had royal blood in their veins. I daresay you will smile at that, but I am quite disposed to believe it."

"And so am I," agreed his guest; "I have known traditions of that sort looked into, and proved to be quite true."

"However," Father Russell went on, "both father and mother died, leaving two helpless children, Michael and Kathleen. Your relative fathered them, and his good old housekeeper looked after them, and both had a very good education. Now Michael is head clerk in Casey's, the lawyer's office. Kathleen was sent



to a training-college ; she got her certificate and taught the school here. At the picnic, two years ago, a heavy shower came on, and Lady Eskdale very kindly had the children into the Hall. I am glad to say they behaved very well, and your mother and sisters were quite pleased with them, and very much taken with Kathleen O'Gorman. To amuse the children she sang songs to them—she sings and plays beautifully.

“So after that day Kathleen was sometimes invited to the Hall, and was made a great deal too much of. Then she got acquainted with Mrs. Bold, and George Bold fell in love with her. It was a hard time for poor Kathleen. Her old friend, Father Eskdale, had become too feeble for parish work, and had retired to a small property he held in the next county. The priest who succeeded him did not like Kathleen. He thought her too much of a lady for the mistress of a poor-school, and that she was not strong enough for the work. He also disliked her being so much with Protestants, and made up his mind to discharge her. Her brother Michael was away on business, old Father Eskdale was too ill at that time to answer letters or to see any one ; Kathleen had, therefore, no one to turn to, and before she knew rightly what she was about, George Bold had had the banns published in the



Protestant church, and they were married there. It gave great scandal and was a bitter grief to Father Eskdale, for he loved these children as if they had been his own. Kathleen has had a son, and the child was baptized in the Protestant church. Now, do you think you can do any good in this case?"

It was evident that Father Eskdale had become much interested in this story.

"I must try," he answered, thoughtfully. "I will go and see George; but I confess I hoped that he would have come to see me. I heard that he was a prosperous man, and I thought he might find the visit of a priest inconvenient. I can well believe that he would be a somewhat hard and masterful husband."

"He has indeed prospered," said Father Russell. "He started as a carpenter, but he has risen to be a builder, and something of an architect too. It was really he who restored the old parish church."

"I am glad to hear that," replied Father Eskdale, "for I helped him a little, and sent him books on architecture, when I was at Oxford. Anyhow, I'll go and see him."

It was then that Father Russell proposed another piece of work, and suggested that, if it would not tire his guest—for he was not allowed

to do that—he should give a course of simple lectures on the next few Sunday evenings.

“Tire me !” exclaimed Father Eskdale ; “it would refresh me. Will lectures on the Mass do ?”

“Nothing could be better,” replied Father Russell, and added, “I am often distressed at the way my people miss Mass !”

Father Eskdale then explained that he had brought with him rough notes on the Mass, which he hoped to have quiet enough, while he rested, to put into order.

So it was agreed that Father Russell should give notice on the next Sunday that Father Eskdale would deliver such lectures, and besides this should have placards as follows posted in the town :—

IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH  
ESK WORTH  
A COURSE OF LECTURES  
ON THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS  
WILL BE GIVEN ON SUNDAY EVENINGS  
BY  
FATHER ESKDALE

BEGINNING ON SUNDAY NEXT, SEPTEMBER 9TH, at 7.30.

After this, Father Eskdale spent some time each morning in preparation. In the afternoon he walked out, and one day paid a visit to George

Bold. He told Father Russell that he had found George rather stand-off at first, only willing to talk of the prosperity of Eskworth. He hoped soon that they would have a corporation and a mayor; and he seemed to think that one day George Bold might be that mayor.

"But," said Father Eskdale, "I broke the ice by saying, 'Why, George, I hear that you are married—and to a Catholic!'"

"And what did he say to that?" asked Father Russell.

"Well, he winced a bit, but in a little while, he spoke out frankly. He is very unhappy about his wife. It is evident that he has great affection for her, and he is distressed at seeing the depressed state she is in. She hardly spoke about religion, he says, before their marriage, and he thought that she would come his way, when she knew what the Church of England was. The clergyman had told him that there was scarcely any difference between the two religions."

"Yes," interrupted Father Russell, "and poor Kathleen flattered herself that George would soon be a Catholic."

"That's always the case," said his friend. "What a curse those mixed marriages are! However, I parted good friends with George, and I am to see him again."

"Still," continued Father Russell, "I am glad to say that Mrs. Bold does what is necessary : she comes to Mass on Sundays, and I know she made her Easter Communion."

The next day, as they sat down to dinner, Father Russell began : "I am in high spirits about your lectures ; so many people in the town are looking forward to them. You see, your name is a power here ; your family is so respected and loved."

"When I was in the train coming here," remarked Father Eskdale, "I heard poor people talking of my relations, especially of my sister Peggy, whom I recollect as a delightful girl of sixteen. She is now four-and-twenty. I should think she visited very kindly among the poor."

"She does indeed, among Catholics as well as Protestants, every one speaks in her praise, and the only fault I hear put down to her is that she refuses every offer of marriage made to her. She is devoted to her father and mother and the poor. As to your father—shortly before they all went abroad I was walking in the town, and was struck by the manner of a gentleman before me to whom so many bowed. He had a gracious word for every one. Soon after I got home, Sir John Eskdale was announced, and when he walked in I recognized the gentleman I had seen

in the streets. I shall never forget his kind and noble bearing. He began by saying, 'You must excuse me, Father Russell, but I wanted to ask you to do me a favour before I go abroad. I know that many of your congregation are poor, and winter is coming on. May I ask you to accept this?' and he put a bank-note into my hand. When I began to thank him, and promised to pray for him and to get the poor to pray for him too, he said, 'That will put me into your debt.' After a little pause—I think he was pulling himself together—he went on, 'I have a son, a member of your Church; he is always most dear to me. I give this partly for his sake. When he became a Catholic it was thought better that he should not come home.' Then he turned away—I felt he could not say more—pressed my hand, and went. I found he had given me twenty pounds. I am sure many will come to the lectures, if only to hear the son of Sir John Eskdale and the brother of Miss Peggy."

"That may be," replied Father Eskdale. "Still, I intend my lectures more for Catholics than for Protestants. I don't like controversy."

"I am very glad of that," said Father Russell. "Among Protestants one expects a blank ignorance of sacrifice, but I am distressed to find so

much ignorance among Catholics ; and our first duty is to those of the 'household of faith.' But would you object to your lectures being reported in the *Eskworth Independent* ?”

“Why ?” asked Father Eskdale.

“Because the editor, Stubbs, has asked leave to report them. He is an odd, to me a disagreeable, man, but rather a power in the town. He hates Ritualism, and despises Dissent. He is generally civil to Catholics, and looks upon them as real, sincere, and in earnest ; but I don't think he has any religion himself.”

“If,” said Father Eskdale, “he will let me look over his reports, so that I may not be made to talk nonsense, or heresy even, I shall be very glad.”

“I think,” observed Father Russell, “that the lectures will do more good by appearing in the *Independent* ; and I am sure that he will be glad for you to correct the proofs.”

“Then let them be reported by all means, and if they do any good, your friend Stubbs may get some merit out of them.”

This little story is a peg on which the lectures are to hang.



## LECTURE I

### SACRIFICE IS NECESSARY

ON the Thursday evening after Father Eskdale's first lecture, Michael O'Gorman went, as he had agreed, to George Bold's, with that day's *Eskworth Independent* in his hand. George hardly liked to be seen in the Catholic chapel, and yet he wanted to hear the lecture ; so it was arranged that his brother-in-law should come and read it to him from the Eskworth paper, and, as Michael said to his sister, that would give them an opportunity of talking about the matter afterwards.

The room was a picture of comfort : George sitting in the armchair prepared to listen, Kathleen with her china ready—for she hoped that Father Eskdale might come in and take a cup of tea—and Michael with his paper near a shaded lamp.

"I need not read the editor's excuse for re

porting these lectures," said Michael. "Of course he sneers a little at the vicar, *Father Sweetman*, and reminds the Dissenters that *Father Eskdale*, like them, suffers for conscience sake. He says that he has on former occasions reported sermons of interest, and adds that *Father Eskdale* has kindly promised to correct the proofs for him. As for *Sacrifice*—the matter of the lectures—he seems to think that it is some abstract idea, of no practical bearing. I observed myself what he says about people being struck by *Father Eskdale's* likeness to *Sir John*. I heard people whispering, 'How like his father!' and this likeness was still more marked in his voice, his manner of speaking, and in his whole bearing. He looked as if he recognized old friends too; and I think that what *Stubbs* says is true—that although he is not what we should call an orator, he spoke in so simple and homely a way, and with such unmistakable earnestness that he quite held his audience, as it were."

And now for the lecture. *Father Eskdale* begins :—

Let me state at once my object in giving these lectures on *Sacrifice*, and on the *Sacrifice of the Mass*. I intend them for Catholics, for the *Sacrifice of the Mass* is the great act of worship in

the Catholic Church. We are all bound to assist at Mass on Sundays and holidays of obligation. To assist at Mass is to take our part in it, so that our hearts should be drawn into the offering of the great High Priest and Victim, our Lord Jesus Christ. I am sure that many neglect to come to Mass on days when they are bound to do so, because they do not clearly understand what this Sacrifice is. And again I am sure that they who do understand what it is, feel, while they go on offering it, day by day and year by year, how little, after all, they know of this adorable, this awful mystery, and they long to learn more and more about it.

We cannot wonder that there are many among us who are ignorant about Mass. For many, the conditions of life are so hard, the means of instruction so few. When a whole nation is Catholic, children pick up their religion instinctively ; but here, although we live among people who have a very real religion, it is a religion without sacrifice. No one, I venture to say, could go into the Protestant parish church of this town without being convinced that there is real religious worship there. I am glad to bear this testimony before the many Protestants I see here to-night. But we live, as I have said, among a people without sacrifice. At the change of

religion in this country in the sixteenth century, the altars were taken away from the churches. For instance, Mass had been offered in the parish church of this town for five hundred years ; but when the altar was taken away, sacrifice ceased to be offered in it. I can remember when the altar-stone was in the pavement, and trodden underfoot as you entered the building.

We cannot, therefore, learn about sacrifice from those among whom we live ; but we have great need to learn well all about so great and important a mystery, first for our own souls and for the souls of our children, but also on account of those who surround us, for God has given man "command concerning his neighbour."<sup>1</sup> In our days there is so much earnest and sincere religious inquiry, not to speak of a decided attempt within the last few years to revive sacrifice in the Church of England, that when a Catholic is asked about Mass he ought to be able to give a good answer. If a Protestant goes into a church of the Establishment or into a Dissenting chapel; he can understand the worship, he can follow the prayers read by the clergyman—many of them beautiful Catholic prayers—or he can enter into the fervent petitions poured forth warm from the heart of a Dissenting minister ; but if he goes to Mass at a

<sup>1</sup> Eccli. xvii. 12.

Catholic chapel, he sees the priest in what are to him strange, unmeaning vestments, standing at the altar, mostly with his back to the congregation. The few words he can catch are in Latin ; he looks in wonder at the people, and, as I have always heard, is impressed with their deep devotion, and feels the power of prayer. If, then, he asks some Catholic neighbour what Mass is, how sad if he gets a confused answer, which leaves him as ignorant as he was before ! This is, I am sorry to say, not uncommon. Therefore for our own sakes, and also for our neighbour's, for the credit of our religion, and not to put our Lord to shame, we should be well instructed about our great act of worship, our solemn sacrifice.

These lectures, then, are for Catholics ; but I have just spoken of Protestants, so before I go on, I wish to say that I mean, as far as possible, to avoid controversy. Of course, my friends, I would to God that you were all Catholics, as, by the grace of God, I am ; but I scarcely think that controversy brings people into the Church. I trust more to a clear and simple statement of doctrine. This I hope to put before you without attacking any one.

First, then, that we may understand thoroughly what sacrifice is, we cannot consult a higher authority than St. Thomas of Aquin. And he



puts this question in the first place, "If mankind had never sinned, should we have been required to offer sacrifice?"

I think you will soon see the use of getting this question answered. For consider man's relation to God. We say, "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth." He has called us forth from nothing, and we so depend on Him that if it were possible for Him to forget us we should fall back into nothing. He has made us to His own image and likeness; He gives us life, the air we breathe, the earth we tread on. All we are, all we have, comes from Him. It is natural for man to worship God, to acknowledge his subjection and dependence on Him. So when we ask whether man would have offered sacrifice to God if he had never sinned, it is the same as to ask, "Is it natural, does our nature demand, that we should worship God by sacrifice?" Or, again, "Is it unnatural not to worship God in this manner?"

Now let me read to you what St. Thomas of Aquin says about this question, and as he writes in a dry, theological style, I will try to draw out his meaning in a simple way. He says that "in every age, and in all nations, there has always been some act of sacrifice. Natural reason



teaches man that he is subject to some superior on account of the defects which he recognizes in himself, and which require that he should be helped and directed. This Superior is understood by all to be God. But as in nature, inferior things are subject to superior things, so also natural reason teaches man, that according to natural inclination he should show forth subjection and honour in a human way to Him who is above man. One way of doing this, well befitting man's nature, is that he should make use of sensible things to express what he means, because he receives his knowledge through sensible things. Hence, it follows from natural reason that man should use sensible things, offering them to God in sign of the subjection and honour which he owes to Him, as those do who make offerings to their lords, in acknowledgment of the dominion to which they are subject; and such an offering suggests the idea of sacrifice." <sup>1</sup>

- Now mark how St. Thomas begins : "*In every age and in all nations, there has always been some act of sacrifice.*" So it was when St. Thomas wrote some six hundred years ago. We know how God was worshipped by sacrifice in the time of our first parents, from what we read of the

<sup>1</sup> Sum. S. Th. 2, 2æ, Q. 85, A. 1.

sacrifices of Cain and Abel ; and again we know how sacrifices went on among the Patriarchs, how God ordained, through Moses, worship by sacrifice. These sacrifices were offered in the time of our Lord.

Again, sacrifice was universal in the pagan world. When the Christian faith began to be spread among the Gentiles, we read in the Acts of the Apostles how that it was forbidden in any way to take part in the sacrifices of the heathen. And I believe that it has been proved by learned men that the first and only religion in the world without sacrifice is the Protestant religion. If, then, to worship God by sacrifice is so universal, that surely is a strong argument for its being natural to man.

But then St. Thomas gives his reason. He says, "If those among men who are subject, profess their submission to those who have authority, or are lords over them, by some outward act, so it is natural for man in the same way, by some outward act, to profess their submission to God." But this will be clearer if we take an example.

Let us suppose, then, that a certain king, seeing many families in his dominions in absolute poverty, so that they would die if left without help, takes pity on them, and determines to send

them to an island as yet uninhabited. He has houses built for them, and everything prepared, so that when they arrive they may be able to live on the produce of the island. But the king foresees that if these people are left to themselves, in a short time they will consider the island as their own, and will forget their state of dependence. For before long they will say, If the king did not mean to give us the island for our own, he would have required that we should in some way acknowledge his authority. He therefore decrees that once a year the prince, his son, shall go to the island, in order that an elder, chosen by the king from among the people, should make an offer of the produce of the island to the prince, and that all the islanders, by being present, should join in this offering, while the act of homage is made in their name.

Now if we read of this in history, we should say that the king had acted wisely and justly. So, then, St. Thomas concludes that it is natural, reasonable, and just that somewhat in this way, men should acknowledge their dependence on God. And such an offering, he says, suggests the idea of sacrifice.

I hope you have followed my explanation of the argument of St. Thomas. You see, he first lays down the principle that sacrifice to God is

universal among mankind. This is a very strong reason for concluding that sacrifice is natural; for it would be impossible to get an unnatural kind of worship so spread throughout the world. St. Thomas then gives his reason, which I try to enforce by my example of the people in the island. From this example we may draw two more lessons.

Each person on the island would feel that he had to acknowledge his dependence on the king, not only on his own account, but for the blessings he received from living with relations and friends and from all about him. So his act of homage would be for his own particular benefits, and for the general benefits to himself and others. He would therefore see the convenience of one being appointed by the king to make this act of homage for himself and for all. And so we see why a priest is appointed to offer sacrifice to God for men.

And again, if on the day set apart by the king for this act of homage any one stayed away by his own fault, the very staying away would be a distinct refusal to acknowledge the dominion of the king over the island. And this should make us understand what an offence it is to God when a man, by his own fault, misses Mass, the sacrifice by which we all acknowledge our dependence on

our Creator. Surely, then, I may conclude that men agree that it is right and reasonable, according to the true impulse of our nature, to acknowledge by a solemn act of worship our dependence on God. And in these days, when God is so sadly forgotten, and even denied, it is all the more the duty of each one of us to declare by our sacrifice, "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth." Thus, throughout the world, from the rising to the setting of the sun, our sacrifice is ever offered to God ; for this intention first of all, as we say to Him in the prayer so generally read before Mass, "for Thy own honour, praise, adoration, and glory. Prostrate before Thee, sensible of our own unworthiness, and conscious of our absolute dependence on Thee, we hereby acknowledge Thee as the great Arbiter of life and death ; we adore Thee as the supreme Ruler and Arbiter of all things."

"Now, George," asked Michael, "what do you think of that ?"

"I can't say," replied George ; "I must read over the lecture quietly by myself, and let it settle in my mind."

"Anyhow," persisted Michael, "you will admit that sacrifice is a profound and awful act of



worship. Why, even if it were mere bread and wine which we offered and then destroyed before God, to signify that God gives us life and may take it away, such an act of worship would humble us before the Majesty of God in our nothingness, as simply asking God for what we want never could do."

"But," said George, "it is so new and strange to me. This would be quite a different religion from ours."

"I admit that," agreed Michael; "ours is quite a different religion from yours.- Now just think: suppose that our Lord were dying on the Cross and that a lot of Christians were kneeling round, each one would feel, 'He has taken my sins upon Himself, He is offering Himself to the Eternal Father for me.' And if then one began to read out prayers, or pour out an extempore prayer for all to join in, how each one would say, 'I don't want your prayers, I want to pray alone with God.' It is in this way we pray at Mass, for it is the same sacrifice as that of the Cross. Yes, our religion is quite different from yours."

"And yet our vicar told me that there was scarcely any difference, and that he, too, offered sacrifice."

"But you know," said Michael, "the former



vicar did not say so ; and although this vicar may declare that he offers sacrifice, as Father Eskdale says, the idea of so worshipping God has been destroyed in England, for they pulled down the altars ; and it would take a good deal of time and teaching to get the idea of sacrifice into the mind of the country again. Kathleen," he asked, turning to his sister, "did you understand sacrifice in this way before ?"

"Well," answered Kathleen, "of course I always say that prayer with which Father Eskdale finished ; but the lecture has made the matter clearer to me. I had not thought that man would have offered sacrifice if he had not sinned. At all events I see that in sacrifice language or words do not matter. It always struck me that when our Lord was offering Himself on the Cross in sacrifice, He said no word about offering Himself for our sins. I used to say, when people objected to our service being in Latin, that we had a translation of it into English in our prayer-books ; but I always felt that this was not the right answer. I see it so clearly now ; and it is just what dear old Father Eskdale used to say : 'Mass is an *act* of worship, and an *act* does not depend upon words.'"

Just then the door opened, and Father Eskdale

walked in. George greeted him very kindly, saying—

“Michael has just been reading your lecture to us, and we were talking it over.”

“Do you know, George,” he asked, “where I got my first notion of sacrifice?”

George shook his head doubtfully.

“It was in this very parish church,” continued Father Eskdale. “You remember how, when I got to Oxford, I took up architecture as a hobby, and used to visit every old church that I could discover?”

“Yes; and how kind you were in sending me books. There they are,” said George, pointing to a shelf.

“Well, then I came home for the long vacation. Oh, how grieved I was at seeing the old altar-stone in the floor, for every one to tread upon as they entered the church! You know in those days we went to the morning service on Sundays; once a quarter there was communion, and my father used to go to it, and to put a sovereign into the plate; but none of us had any thought of sacrifice. I had got to understand something about churches, and could see where the different altars had stood, and how our old church was so built as to lead one up to the altars. When I saw that statues of saints had

been in the niches, and figures of saints in the stained-glass windows, the thought came to me that the altar was for sacrifice, and that sacrifice is only offered to God. The saints come in, as praying with and for us ; light and warmth come to us through them."

"Oh yes," exclaimed George, "I quite see that worshipping God by sacrifice is very different from asking the saints to pray to God for us ! But one thing disturbs me in your lecture—it makes me feel that your religion is so different from ours. Still I must wait and see how the lectures go on."

"And above all, my dear George, you must pray."

George promised that he would, and at that moment he was called out on business. Mrs. Bold had been watching her husband with intense anxiety, and she now turned to Father Eskdale, saying—

"Oh, Father, I am so unhappy about my baby ! And do you think I may hope George will ever be a Catholic ?"

"We must all pray," answered Father Eskdale. "I believe his great difficulty will be his pride and his prosperity ; but he has such a good heart, and is so true, that I have great hope. As for your child, I have inquired, and find that the

present vicar baptizes most carefully ; so you may be sure that the boy is a Catholic now. You must practise your religion wisely and faithfully ; be obedient, and make your home happy for George, and then we may trust that in time all will be well."

## LECTURE II

### SACRIFICE FOR SIN

**G**EORGE BOLD became thoroughly interested in Father Eskdale's first lecture. He read it by himself, thought it over, and at last said to his wife—

"I begin to see that the idea of worshipping God by sacrifice, and by such an act to acknowledge God as our Creator and Lord, is very grand indeed. I see, too, that it is natural to worship in this way."

"And," said Kathleen, "is not the idea quite new and strange to you?"

"Yes," he replied, "I must own that. I wonder what the next lecture is to be about? I am quite impatient for Thursday evening."

Michael O'Gorman was late the next Thursday, and apologized for having been detained at the office, as he walked in with the paper in his hand. He began at once to read as follows :—

I trust that you have gone with me as far as this, namely, that it is natural to worship God by sacrifice ; first, from seeing that such worship has been, if not universal, at least very general and widely spread among men ; and secondly, because of the reason which St. Thomas of Aquin gives, that if by some outward act men acknowledge their dependence on those who have authority over them, so it is much more necessary that by some outward act men should acknowledge their dependence on God, their Creator and Lord.

From this we may see that, even had man never sinned, he would, according to his nature, have worshipped God by sacrifice. I think also you will have agreed with me that such an act of worship is more sublime, more worthy, more powerful than any worship by mere words. Being an *act*, it can be done without words, so that, if words are employed in it, it matters not whether they are understood, for the *act* speaks louder than words. We may see, too, the convenience, if not the necessity, of one being appointed as a priest to offer this sacrifice for each and for all ; while those present, understanding the meaning and intention of this act of worship, enter into it, take part in it, and offer with the priest.

But man has sinned, and you know that God



decreed that atonement, satisfaction for sin, should be made by the sacrifice of the Cross. Need I say that my whole hope and intention in giving these lectures is that you may all enter more perfectly into this sacrifice ?

So now it will be well for us to consider what sin is.

“Sin,” according to our Catechism, “is an offence against God by any thought, word, or deed against the law of God.”

Again, sin is distinguished into original and actual sin. Original sin we contract from the guilt of our first parents. God gave to them, besides their nature, the gift of grace. Grace enlightens the understanding, and moves the will towards God. But when they deliberately chose to obey the devil instead of God, they lost the gift of grace, were turned away from God, and became slaves of the devil.

Children follow the condition of their parents. We see this around us, and we feel the necessity of such a law. For instance, it has pleased a king to raise a beggar to be a lord, and he gives him possessions suitable to his rank. But the man is drawn into treason by an enemy of the king ; the king deprives him of his rank and position, and he and his children become beggars again.

So, by the sin of our first parents, we have lost the gift of grace, and are turned away from God ; as David says : " Behold I was conceived in my iniquities, and in sins did my mother conceive me." <sup>1</sup>

But actual sin is the sin which we ourselves commit, and so by our own act turn away from God. Actual sin may be what is called real or personal. These distinctions may seem tiresome, but if you will attend, I think you will see how they help us to understand the plan of our redemption.

As to real sin, take an example. A man sees £5 on the table. He does not know to whom it belongs, and he steals it. He can satisfy for this sin by replacing the money. But if a master has taken a servant from poverty and misery, has treated him with every kindness, trusting him entirely, and if the servant should steal £5 from him, the offence would be personal. Replacing the money would not satisfy for the offence, and the master would say, " It is not the money that I care for ; it is the dishonesty, the deceit, the ingratitude, the disobedience which offend me." We all feel the sting of a personal offence, such as an insult, for instance ; and we understand that the offence is the greater, according to the

<sup>1</sup> Psa. 1. 7.

greatness of the person offended and the smallness of the offender. This is put before us in a most striking way in the tragedy of 'King Lear,' when the outraged king and father breaks out into that terrible curse against his ungrateful children.

St. Thomas says that the evil of sin committed against God is in a manner infinite, because of the infinite difference between God and man.<sup>1</sup> We are conceived and born in sin, without grace, and turned away from God. Consider against whom we sin.

God is our Creator. He has brought us forth out of nothing. By the blood of Christ, applied to us in baptism, grace is given to us, and we are made children of God. After that if, when we come to know right and wrong of our own deliberate will, we turn away from God, and say "Non serviam"—"I will not serve; I will not obey"—how awful is this personal offence!

We need to keep this truth clearly before our minds: Sin is a personal offence against a God of infinite majesty, power, and goodness. My sins are an offence against God who created me, who watches over me by His loving providence, against God who has long had patience with me, and who judges me now, and will judge me when

<sup>1</sup> Sum. S. Th. 3a pars. Q. 1, A. 2, ad 2m.

I die. But again, I have sinned against God who became man for me, who suffered and died for me. I look at the crucifix and see my offences written in the blood of God. Consider how when a man dies in sin he is alone in that moment before God, and judged. If during life he has thought little of sin, has laughed at it, gloried in it, and has behaved as if the only evil of sin was when it resulted in trouble, either to others or to himself, he now sees too late that the evil of sin is the offence against God. As David says : "To Thee only have I sinned and have done evil before Thee." <sup>1</sup> Too late he understands the word of God : "Hear, O ye heavens, and give ear, for the Lord hath spoken : I have brought up children and have exalted them ; but they have despised me." <sup>2</sup>

When we sin, then, we commit a personal offence against God. But God is of infinite mercy.

Let me tell you how our Catholic forefathers had this truth put before them in what were called Mystery Plays.

Before the Blessed Trinity came the angel of mercy, pleading for man. Then the angel of justice urged his claims, and it was shown that no mere creature could make satisfaction to God

<sup>1</sup> Psal. l. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. i. 2.

for the offence of sin. Just when there seemed to be no hope for man, God the Holy Ghost says that he who redeemed man should be both God and man. He should be God, to make an act of atonement worthy for God to accept, and man also, for man has committed the offence. Then God the Father says: "Son, it is fitting that this satisfaction should be made by Thee, for as by Thee I created man, so by Thee man should be redeemed." God the Son then offers to become man, and to make the act of atonement, if only God the Father will accept this satisfaction for the sin of man. The promise is given; the Holy Ghost undertakes to provide a body and soul for the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, and the decree is passed in heaven for the redemption of mankind. Then, according to the play, the angels of justice and mercy are reconciled, as in the words of the Psalm: "Mercy and truth have met each other, justice and peace have kissed. Truth is sprung out of the earth, and justice hath looked down from heaven."<sup>1</sup> The scene ends by the angels kissing one another.

The more we consider the Divine plan for our redemption, the more we are amazed and wonder. We never could have conceived such mercy,

<sup>1</sup> Psal. lxxxiv. 11, 12.



such wisdom. Doubtless God could have pardoned man without exacting satisfaction, but then His justice would not have been satisfied.

On Holy Saturday, at the blessing of the paschal candle, this mystery is powerfully set before us. The deacon sings: "We glorify the Father Almighty and His only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who paid for us the debt of Adam to His Eternal Father, and with His merciful blood washed away the handwriting of our ancient sin. . . . O inestimable love! That Thou mightest redeem a slave, Thou didst deliver up Thy Son."

There is, no doubt, a certain instinct of sacrifice in the world. It is observed even in ants and among animals, and we sometimes hear, for instance, of a devoted sister giving up her fortune to pay the debts of a spendthrift brother. In such a case, we detest the selfishness and meanness of the brother, and are delighted with the sister's self-sacrifice. There is a beautiful story told in the life of Jacopone da Todi, the author of the 'Stabat Mater.' He was in his youth a dissolute Italian noble, married to a beautiful and holy woman. While going on in his wild career, he one day went to a festival with his wife, who to please him had dressed herself splendidly. In the midst of the entertainment



a terrible accident happened, and she fainted. When her dress was loosened to give her air, a rough hair-shirt was discovered beneath it. Her husband uttered a cry of horror. "Penitenza per te"—"Penance for thee"—she murmured with her last breath. It would have been wonderful after this had Jacopone not been converted.

We have another grand example of this spirit of self-sacrifice for others in those Religious Orders founded for the redemption of captives. The members of these Orders used to redeem and save captives in danger of losing their faith among the Saracens, by taking the place of these poor slaves, in order that they might go free, and be able to practise their religion.

I say, then, we recognize and understand even a certain natural spirit of sacrifice among men, and we see how Christians have raised it to very high perfection from contemplating the sacrifice of the Cross, although no sacrifice men can make is to be compared to that of God becoming man, and dying on the Cross for us.

What insane folly it would be for a man to lay down his life, say, to save a dog! But the difference in worth and dignity between a man and a dog is nothing compared to the difference between God and man.

For all this, although it is impossible to imagine a case of sacrifice among men at all parallel to that of our Lord redeeming us, I still think that we may get some help, and understand better from an example ; so I will carry on the one I proposed in my last lecture.

I spoke of an island inhabited by several poor families sent there by the king to save them from starving. The king, having provided abundant means of existence for these poor people, exacts an act of homage to be made to his son the prince, in acknowledgment of their dependence.

Now let us say that the prince, with the consent of his father, marries the daughter of the principal family in the island. We understand at once that he would be looked up to as the chief man among the inhabitants. Let us further suppose that his wife has a younger brother, who gets among bad and discontented people, eager to declare the island independent of the king. The young man attends rebellious meetings, and one evening, perhaps by accident, as he leaves the house to join the conspirators, takes the prince's hat and cloak. The king knows of this conspiracy ; the meetings are watched by his agents, and it is reported to him that his son attends them, for the young man is mistaken for

the prince. By the king's order, his son is seized and imprisoned. The prince sends for his brother-in-law, reproaches him for his ingratitude, makes him feel his folly and guilt, and tells him that he will suffer in his place and save him. "You are weak," he says; "a very short time in prison would cause your death; but I know that very soon my father will find out that it was not I but you who were among the conspirators. He will send for you; then give him this letter, in which I have prayed my father to let me suffer for you, and for all those who were rebelling against him. I have reminded him that he allowed me to marry your sister, and that by so doing I became one of you, and that my suffering will, more than anything else, teach the people how abominable the spirit of rebellion is. Seeing me in chains for you, will, I hope, move you to more sorrow than if you yourself suffered; so, I pray my father to let me offer myself in your place, and you must pray him to accept me, suffering for you."

I think that this example, though in many ways quite improbable, may be of some use. Let us apply it. Our Lord, by taking human nature, is wedded to us, and becomes the head of mankind—the true, the second Adam. As the prince saves the young man by taking his offence upon

himself, so our Lord takes our sins upon Himself, and saves us by suffering in our place. As, however, the king, finding that it is not the prince but his brother-in-law who has rebelled, the young man would not be saved unless the king agreed to accept his son's suffering instead. So, for our redemption it is necessary for God the Father to accept God the Son made man offering Himself for us. But what I want above all to point out is, that it is not the going to prison of the prince that could save the young man, but the offering that the prince makes of himself in the place of others ; and further, for the young man to be saved, he must beg the king to accept the offering which the prince makes for him.

So, for our redemption it is above all necessary that our Lord should offer Himself for us. This offering is the essence, the necessary condition of our atonement. Had He died on the Cross, but had not offered Himself for us, there would have been no sacrifice and no salvation. It is this act of offering that makes the death of our Lord a sacrifice. Such is the teaching of St. Thomas of Aquin,<sup>1</sup> and it is well to remark that all theologians teach that if our Lord had offered any act, however slight, a mere genuflection

<sup>1</sup> Summa. I, 2æ, Q. 102, 3 ad 8.

even, for the redemption of man, it would have been abundantly sufficient to satisfy the justice of God ; for being the act of God made man, it would be of infinite value. We must, however, bear in mind that it is not enough for our salvation that our Lord should offer Himself for us. We must offer Him up too. How we are to do this I must explain in my next lecture.

As soon as Michael had finished reading, George Bold looked up and said—

“Now I see what Stubbs meant. I was in the office of the *Independent* on Monday, about an advertisement, when the editor came in. He said he did not like what Father Eskdale had said about sin ; but when I had heard his objection, I answered that *he* seemed to think the world was made and governed by some blind machine. He hardly denied that, and told me that he was a sort of agnostic, whatever that may mean. But I see how true and how very necessary it is to teach that sin is a personal offence against God.”

Here the bell rang. George went to the door and brought in Father Eskdale, telling him that Stubbs had objected to the plan of redemption as unreasonable, and had declared that justice could never be satisfied by an innocent victim suffering for the guilty.



"Ah," replied Father Eskdale, "that is a very old difficulty. Perhaps the best way of answering it is on the principle that it would be impossible to get a doctrine accepted by so many millions as make up, broadly speaking, the whole Christian world, and for nineteen hundred years, if it were against reason. I believe it was Lord Macaulay who, on this principle, said that the doctrine of transubstantiation was not against reason. And we may apply the same principle to all our mysteries."

"Yes," said George, "I see that."

"There is another way," continued Father Eskdale; "first, to prove that Jesus Christ is truly God, that He gave us a religion, and that this Divine religion teaches us the doctrine of redemption."

"Yes," said George again, "I see that would do, for the religion that God teaches us cannot be against the reason which He gives to us."

"Quite right," agreed Father Eskdale; "but if God has given us a religion, we should expect that religion to be above and beyond what we could make out for ourselves by mere reason. We should expect that it would satisfy the wants we feel, and even go beyond them, and be more beautiful, and of a higher order than anything we could have expected or desired. For in-



stance, man could prove by reason that there was one God—personal, infinite in all perfections ; but when the doctrine of the Trinity is proposed to him, he would feel that here was something more sublime, above and beyond anything he could have conceived. We all feel that it is very beautiful when one man sacrifices himself for another, but that is as nothing, compared to the goodness of God in becoming man, and dying on the Cross for us.”

“I think I take that in too,” said George.

“The difficulty of the innocent suffering for the guilty is lessened,” continued Father Eskdale, “if the innocent person, as in our doctrine, makes himself one with the guilty—becomes the head of the guilty race. Then again, other motives come in, if, for instance, he offers himself of his own free will, as our Lord did ; and again, if the suffering is to be but for a time, and great good is to be got from it for all eternity. I hoped to some extent that the example I gave of the prince suffering for the young man, his brother-in-law, would meet some of these difficulties, though, as I mean these lectures for Catholics and not for unbelievers, I hardly wished to deal with these objections.”

“But,” said George, “I am very glad that you

did so, for I understand the plan of redemption better than I did."

"Do you see," asked Father Eskdale, "that it is necessary in this place, that the victim should offer himself, and also that the one to be redeemed should offer up the victim too? I want to insist very much on this act of offering. If, in the Old Law, a priest had killed a lamb, poured out its blood at the foot of the altar, and had gone through all the outward acts of worship, but had made no act of offering—it would not have been a sacrifice, but a mere outward acting of the rite. And much more, if our Lord had died on the Cross, but had not offered Himself for us, would there have been no redemption and no sacrifice. Again, had He offered Himself, but we did not offer Him up too, we could get no salvation from the sacrifice He offered."

"Yes," said George, "I am quite clear about that."

## LECTURE III

### SACRIFICES OF THE OLD LAW

FATHER ESKDALE was warmly welcomed by George and Kathleen, when he appeared on the next Thursday evening in their little parlour, before the reading was begun.

"We must brush up our Bible history to-night, George," said Michael, "for this third lecture is all about the Jewish sacrifices."

"I only speak about three of them," said Father Eskdale; "I shall have to talk of the sacrifice of the Paschal Lamb in my next lecture."

"George knows more about the Old Testament than I do," said Mrs. Bold; "but I think I know the Gospels better than he does. At all events, I know the story of our Lord's life better."

"That question of sacrifice is not an easy one," observed her husband, "but I think we have got

over the hardest part. I don't know that I quite understand the Jewish sacrifices, though Kathleen does think me so well up in the Old Testament. I shall only be too glad to learn more about them. Now Michael, let us hear. I'm all attention."

Then Michael began :—

The question we have before us to-night is, How are we to offer up Christ our Lord? For I may certainly take it for granted that we all agree sufficiently about the plan of redemption, that God the Son became man, that He took our sins upon Himself, and that He offered Himself in sacrifice for us on the Cross. And we understand also, that not only was it necessary that God the Father should accept His only begotten Son, made man, and offering Himself for us, but that we ourselves should offer Him up too. How sad, how dreadful it would be, had such a price been paid for our redemption, and yet we were to be lost through our not taking our part in the sacrifice, that is, through our not offering up our Lord, while He offers Himself up to the Eternal Father for us!

We shall come to a clearer understanding of our subject if we begin by considering how man offered sacrifice, from the time of the sin of our

first parents, to that of the sacrifice of the Cross. And I trust you will allow me to put this before you very much as I should before an intelligent child.

You know how our first parents, Adam and Eve, sinned in Paradise, by eating the forbidden fruit ; and how, although God forewarned them, saying that if they disobeyed they should die, yet they did eat the fruit, and God punished them by the penalty of death, by depriving them of the gift of grace, and by turning them out of the Garden of Eden, mercifully promising them, however, a Redeemer. Satan, in the form of a serpent, had led them into the sin, and as, by their own fault, they had chosen to do the will of the devil instead of the will of God, they justly fell under the power of the devil, and became his slaves. Having become slaves of the devil, it was natural that their children should be in the same misery ; but God promised that at last Satan should be conquered, and that man should be freed from the slavery he was under. The head of the serpent was to be crushed by the woman through her seed. "And the Lord said to the serpent : I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed : she shall crush thy head."<sup>1</sup> Now, we may be sure

<sup>1</sup> Gen. iii. 15.

that Adam told his children of the promised Redeemer, and so this truth was spread among men. The earth itself may be said to bear witness to the fact, that man is under the anger of God through sin ; for though, on the one hand, it tells us of the infinite power, wisdom, and goodness of God, yet when we consider the miseries in the world, we see that things have gone wrong, and it is easy to believe that God is offended with man. But when we hear that God in His mercy has promised a Redeemer, while we feel grateful, we say that we might have hoped, we might almost have expected, this, from the goodness of God to His poor creatures.

This truth, then, of a promised Redeemer was handed down from Adam to Noe, from Noe to Abraham, then through Isaac and Jacob to the children of Israel, who later on became the nation of the Jews. By the Jews this truth was ever clearly held. The rest of the world—the gentiles—knew it only in a dim, confused way ; and although, through the malice of the devil, it became sadly perverted among men in general, still we do find some traces of a belief in a Redeemer to come, and one great act of worship served to keep it in some measure alive—the act, namely, of sacrifice. *Sacrifice was the one great act of worship throughout the world.*



In Bible history we read how in the time of Adam, Cain and Abel offered sacrifice. Noe, when he came out of the ark, offered sacrifice also; and we all know the story of Abraham, who was willing, at the word of God, to offer up his son Isaac. Later on, when God led the children of Israel out of Egypt, the demand of God through Moses to Pharaoh was, "Let my people go, that they may sacrifice to me in the desert."<sup>1</sup>

Among the Gentiles also, sacrifice was the one great act of worship. For the most part they were sunk in the grossest idolatry; still there were some among them who were pure in faith and worship, and who offered sacrifice, as Job and Melchisedech, and we may hope that there were more. It is very interesting to study the sacrifices offered by heathen nations, for although, as St. Paul tells us, "what they offered, they offered to the devils,"<sup>2</sup> yet every now and then we discern some faint glimmering of the original story handed down from Adam, that the anger of God was to be appeased by the sacrifice of an innocent victim.

From the fact that sacrifice was so universal in the world, and that it was carried out with such detail in everyday life (for example, before

<sup>1</sup> Exod. v. 1.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. x. 20.

drinking wine the pagans would pour out some as an offering to the gods), we may see that it was natural to man to offer sacrifice, and we see also how deep and general was the conviction that man was under the anger of God, and that atonement for sin was to be made by a Redeemer to come.

This general conviction among men explains to us the end and intention for which these sacrifices were offered up—namely, first, to acknowledge God as supreme Lord and Master ; and secondly, to acknowledge that man had sinned, and was under the anger of God. Even pagans, in a dim, confused way, looked forward to the great sacrifice by which the anger of God should be appeased, and satisfaction made for sin. This satisfaction was made, as we know, by the sacrifice of the Cross.

We see, then, that from the beginning of the world sacrifices were offered, first, as we say, under the law of nature, then by the law of worship, which God gave by Moses. By studying this law of worship we gain a clearer knowledge of the sacrifice of the Cross.

You remember, that while the children of Israel were yet in the desert of Sinai, God gave them the ten commandments, the moral law, and also the ceremonial law, teaching them how they were to

worship Him. In order to carry out this worship, they were directed to make the Tabernacle, in which the altar for sacrifice was placed. This Tabernacle could be moved about, and was to serve the Israelites while they were journeying to the Promised Land. But when they were settled there, Solomon built the Temple on Mount Moriah, where the Jewish sacrifices were offered ; and this worship went on till the time of our Lord. We read in the Gospels of His going to Jerusalem for the different feasts of the Law. The worship of these feasts was sacrifice.

Think, then, of our Lord taking part in these sacrifices of the Law, and how in the lamb slain He saw a type, a figure of Himself, in the blood poured out, His own blood, and longed for the hour when He was to fulfil the Law, by shedding His blood and dying for us. He says : " I have a baptism wherewith I am to be baptized : and how am I straitened until it be accomplished." <sup>1</sup>

As we look back to the sacrifice of the Cross, we like to think how devout men looked forward to it during four thousand years ; for all the sacrifices under the law of nature and that of the Jewish Church pointed forward, one in one way

<sup>1</sup> St. Luke xii. 50.

and another in another way, to the one perfect and all-sufficient Sacrifice of Calvary.

These Jewish sacrifices were chiefly of three kinds : *Sacrifice for Sin* ; *Holocaust* ; and *Thanksgiving*, or *Peace-offering*.

In these three sacrifices the blood of the victim was shed ; so they were called *Bloody Sacrifices*.

Blood is the principle of life, and hence the shedding of blood was for the forgiveness of sins<sup>1</sup> ; for the blood shed in sacrifice bore witness that man owned himself a sinner, and that God might justly take his life. These bloody sacrifices were designed as expiation and satisfaction for sin. He who offered up the sacrifice put his hand, or the priest put his hand, on the head of the victim, by which action he meant to put his sins on the victim, and to make himself one with it. Man could not offer himself as a victim in sacrifice, first, because he is in sin and offensive to God, and secondly, because God has not given to man the right to destroy his own life. Therefore God ordained, that atonement

<sup>1</sup> St. Thom. Sum. 1a, 2æ, Q. 102, A. 3 ad 8. Blood is chiefly necessary for life : hence the soul is said to be in the blood. Thus, by the shedding of blood was shown that life is from God. And again, by the shedding of blood in the sacrifices of the Old Law, the shedding of the Blood of Christ was shown forth, by which He offered Himself to God for us.

for sin should be made by the blood of an innocent victim.

The *Sacrifice for Sin* was offered for some special sin of an individual. It was sometimes offered for many, sometimes for one. Thus, if a Jew had committed some sin, he would bring a lamb without blemish to the priest; he would lay his hand on the head of the lamb, confess his sins, and so put them on the lamb. Then the blood of the victim was shed by a stroke of the sacrificial knife, and poured on the horns of the altar of holocausts. This pouring of the blood on the horns of the altar, thus lifting the blood up to God, was the mark of the sacrifice for sin.

The *Holocaust* was offered every morning and evening, for the sins of all the people. The mark of the Holocaust was that the victim was wholly consumed by fire. Thus was shown forth what the name itself meant—wholly burnt. It was given up entirely and consecrated to God. By being consumed in the fire the substance of the victim was changed into the substance of the fire, and became spiritualized, in a manner, in the flames. In this way, the victim of the Holocaust expressed the intention of those who offered it to consecrate themselves wholly to God, in a higher spiritual life. The fire on the



altar of Holocausts was never allowed to go out.

In these two sacrifices, the Holocaust and the Sacrifice for sin, sin was put upon the victim. The victim was steeped in sin, was *made sin* for him who offered it. St. Paul says of our Lord : " Him who knew no sin He hath made sin for us." <sup>1</sup>

The third kind of Bloody Sacrifice was the *Thanksgiving*, or *Peace-offering*. Atonement for sin having been made by the sacrifice for sin, and the offerer having consecrated himself entirely to God by the Holocaust, the *Sacrifice of Thanksgiving*, the *Peace-offering*, followed in right order. The offerer was now in a proper state to be in peace with God, and in communion with Him ; and this was shown by his eating the victim, thus making himself one with the victim consecrated to God. This eating of the victim was the characteristic mark of the *Peace-offering*.

When we come to understand the spirit of sacrifice, we see how intimately this eating of the victim enters into it. We also see how in all sacrifice, one is offered in place of another—an innocent one in place of a guilty, as in the parable I gave in my former lecture of the king's son offering himself for his brother-in-law, who

<sup>1</sup> Cor. v. 21.



had been guilty of treason. Now in such a case, he for whom the sacrifice is offered must feel in this way : " He, the victim, offers himself for me ; the innocent suffers, but it is *I* who ought to suffer." We should have felt this above all, had we been kneeling on Calvary while our Lord was dying, offering Himself for us. At the same time we should feel that it is no good for us to offer ourselves to God, sinful and unworthy as we are, unless we offer ourselves with the innocent victim, by eating which we make it one with us, and ourselves one with it ; and so we are offered and consecrated to God.

There were other sacrifices among the Jews besides the Holocaust, the Sacrifice for Sin, and the Peace-offering. Doves, or meal and incense were allowed to be offered by the poor, who could not afford to buy animals for victims. When the produce of the earth was offered, it was to show that man dedicated the works of his hands to God.

Of the sacrifice of the Paschal Lamb I must speak later on.

These sacrifices were indeed, as St. Paul says, "weak and poor elements," and they became even abominations before God, when they were offered as mere outward ceremonies, the Jews having forgotten their teaching and meaning.

Still, the understanding of them may help us to offer up our perfect Sacrifice of the Holy Mass, reaching back to the Sacrifice of Calvary far more perfectly than those of the old dispensation reached forward to it. Let us, then, imagine how a devout, well-instructed Jew, who knew his religion—such a man as holy Simeon, for instance, who was “waiting for the consolation of Israel”<sup>1</sup>—would have offered sacrifice. We may also consider how St. Joseph, the Blessed Virgin, and our Lord Himself offered up these sacrifices.

A devout, well-instructed Jew would enter into their meaning ; he would be enlightened by the living tradition of the Jewish Church, and by the Prophecies, which read to us like histories of Christ’s Passion. Such a man would feel the oppressive weight of sin, of the sins of the whole world, and of his own before God. He would feel the utter helplessness of man to satisfy the justice of God, and how he would long for the promised Redeemer !

Such a Jew offering sacrifice may surely be a lesson to us. In the morning he would stand devoutly at the gate of the sanctuary while the Holocaust was being offered. When the priest, laying his hand on the head of the victim, con-

<sup>1</sup> St. Luke ii. 25.

fessed the sins of those for whom the sacrifice was about to be offered, and so laid their sins on the victim, he would think of Him on whom would be laid the "iniquities of us all."<sup>1</sup> When the lamb was slain, and as the blood was poured out at the foot of the altar, he would look forward to the true Lamb of God, who would shed every drop of His precious blood, and be wholly consumed, even as this victim of the Holocaust was about to be consumed, and so atonement be made for the sins of the world.

Let us again suppose a Jew who, conscious of some sin, would bring a lamb to the priest and confess his iniquity. The priest would then offer the *Sacrifice for Sin*, praying God to see in the blood of the lamb offered, the blood which was to be shed for the sin which the man had now confessed. Then, through the mercy of God, and the sacrifice of the lamb, his sin being forgiven, this Jew would offer the *Sacrifice of Thanksgiving*, or *Peace-offering*, for now he would be at peace with God. Of the lamb thus sacrificed he would eat, and so make himself one with the victim offered and consecrated to God.

"I think," said George, "that I begin to take in the nature of sacrifice. But do you think,

<sup>1</sup> Isa. liii. 6.

Father Eskdale, that the Jews understood this beautiful system?"

"I feel sure that the really devout, and perhaps some of the learned Jews did; but there is no doubt that latterly the mass of the people understood very little. They had got quite wrong about the prophecies, and their worship came to be one of mere outward ceremony. As we now understand the prophecies better even than devout and learned Jews did, for we see them fulfilled, we no doubt understand the meaning of their sacrifices better than they did; for we have the substance, of which they had but the shadow."

"What do you mean by the substance?" asked George.

"I will not begin that subject with you this evening, or I shall forestall my next lecture. I think Michael has a few more lines to read, so we had better let him finish."

Michael continued :—

I trust, then, that we all see, that the one great act of worship from the time of our first parents was sacrifice.

Outside the Jewish people, among the Gentiles, sacrifice, though sadly disfigured and perverted by the wickedness of men, and the malice of

the devil, was the one act of worship by which men confessed that they were under the anger of God, and that they hoped to satisfy His justice and make atonement by offering an innocent victim.

Through the sacrifices ordained by God man was to look forward to the great Redeemer, the Consolation of Israel, and the Saviour of the world. In the fulness of time He came and offered Himself for us on Calvary.

As then, from the sin of our first parents to the Sacrifice of the Cross men were counted as offering up Christ our Lord when they offered these sacrifices ordained by God, which theologians call *relative* sacrifices, because they related to, told of, and led men's minds to the Sacrifice of the Cross, so now we have to see how we are to reach back to that Sacrifice, and how we are to offer up Christ our Lord.

"Well, Father Eskdale," exclaimed George, "I must say I don't see how I can help following you so far. I have been thinking a great deal of all you've said. At first I could not make out why you began about sacrifice being natural to man. I never thought about it in that way before. But now I do see that, as you say, to worship God by sacrifice is according to the law



of nature. Of course I knew that it pleased God that satisfaction for the sin of man should be made by the Sacrifice of the Cross, but I did not take in how men reached forward to it by the sacrifices of the Old Law. So I begin to understand better about the Sacrifice of the Cross."

"I am very glad," said Father Eskdale; "but it is an awful mystery; one can never really understand it."

"I know," replied George; "still, your example of the prince suffering for his brother-in-law, and so saving him, has removed some difficulties which I heard put by that fellow Stubbs, who wanted to make out that the plan of Redemption was altogether against reason."

"But don't you see, George," put in Kathleen, "how very beautiful the plan of Redemption is, as far as we can understand it, and also how beautiful is the system of the Jewish sacrifices, all leading to the Sacrifice of the Cross. The Holocaust, being offered for all, makes one see how Christ died for all, and the Sacrifice for Sin, how he died for each one in particular."

"But, Father Eskdale," said George, "you say that a devout Jew, when he wanted to offer a sacrifice for sin, would confess his sin to the priest, and that the priest, laying his hand on the head of the lamb, would put the sin upon the



victim about to be sacrificed. Did then, the Jews go to confession?"

"Certainly not as we do. The priests of the Jewish Church had no power to forgive sins; but in sacrifices for sin the man, conscious of his guilt, would confess his sins to the priest in order to have them laid on the victim."

"Isn't it something like that when, at Mass, the priest spreads his hands over the bread and wine just before the consecration?" asked Kathleen.

"Yes."

"But then," inquired George, "how did the Jews get their sins forgiven?"

"By an act of contrition," answered Father Eskdale. "As David said, in sorrow for his sin, 'A humble and contrite heart Thou wilt not despise.' And when a Jew offered sacrifice, seeing, in the victim slain and the blood poured out, the true Victim, who by His death would take away his sins, his sacrifice thus offered would help and move him to contrition."

"Then," said Michael, "the eating of the victim is so striking a way of showing how we must be made one with our Lord offering Himself for us."

"I want," said Father Eskdale, "to say a good deal more about that, later on."

"It is all very grand and beautiful—the victim being made sin and destroyed is such a lesson. I suppose prayer comes in somehow?"

"Yes, prayer must have come into the Jewish sacrifices somewhat as it comes into ours, as you will see in Mrs. Bold's 'Garden of the Soul.' If you read that, you will see that you have first of all to offer sacrifice, to acknowledge the supreme dominion of God; in the next place, to satisfy the justice of God for your sins; and after that, you thank God for His goodness. Then, being at peace with God and one with our Lord offered for you, it is the proper time for prayer, and for asking God to give you all you need."

"That is according to the four ends of sacrifice," explained Kathleen.

"I feel that it's getting into me," said George; "I must think over it again."

"And mind you pray over it too," added Father Eskdale.

"Yes, I will," he returned, earnestly.

Tears were in Kathleen's eyes as Father Eskdale said "Good-night, and God bless you all." George pressed his hand hard as he let him out of the door.

## LECTURE IV

### THE SACRIFICE OF THE PASCHAL LAMB AND OF THE MASS

THE next Thursday evening George Bold was kept later than usual at the office, so that Michael arrived before him, and was alone with his sister for a little time.

"Do you think that George wants to escape the lecture this evening?" he asked.

"Oh no," replied Kathleen; "he was anxious to be back as soon as he could. He says very little to me, but I know that he is much interested. He asked me if I had ever understood about the Jewish sacrifices before, and when I said that I had not, his reply was: 'I suspect Father Eskdale is teaching you Catholics a good deal that you did not know before, as well as the rest of us.'"

"Yes, I must own," said Michael, "that it is quite true that Father Eskdale is teaching us all a

good deal we did not know before. Till I heard that first lecture I never thought of sacrifice being according to the law of nature, and therefore so necessary to mankind."

"Neither did I," answered Kathleen, "though dear old Father Eskdale gave us beautiful instructions about Mass. Don't you remember, Michael? and how absorbed and recollected he was at the altar?"

"Yes, and what pains he used to take to teach us. Still, I never took it in as I do now. But I have been longing to tell you about a funny conversation that I couldn't help overhearing the other day between George and Mr. Casey. They had left the door a bit open, and we in the office could hear every word. As soon as they had done their business-talk, George began: 'I say, Casey, what do you think of Father Eskdale's lectures?' 'Oh, I think them very satisfactory,' said Casey, 'and I think we can all agree with him so far. I do hope he won't get into unpleasant controversy.' 'Well, I don't know,' George replied; 'he has made it so clear that sacrifice must be the one great act of worship, that I can't make out how people are to get on, whose whole religion consists of praying for what they want, and of enduring sermons.' I felt inclined to call out, 'Well done, George!

You've got him there,' but Casey went on very quietly, 'I stick to what I was taught as a boy by my mother, a good, pious woman. She was the daughter of a clergyman of the Church of England, and she taught us that, since Christ had offered Himself for us, there was to be no more sacrifice.' 'Anyhow, that's not the teaching of the Church of England now,' said George, 'for our priests do offer sacrifice.' I heard Casey laugh at this and say, 'My dear Bold, you know I take a lawyer's view of these things; and, according to law, altars and sacrifices have been done away with in the Church of England. It's no use getting angry about it; if you'll come to me some evening I'll show you the Acts of Parliament.' 'Nonsense!' protested George; 'Acts of Parliament can't make priests or unmake them.' 'Anyhow, the Church of England *was* made by an Act of Parliament,' retorted Casey, 'and it's no use denying it. I always say it's disgraceful and dishonest for men to take money as clergymen of a Church established by Act of Parliament, and not to obey the laws made for the Church by the Parliament.' When George was leaving the office, Casey said, 'Now do come in some evening, Bold, and read the Acts of Parliament.' I wonder whether he'll go?"

"I am glad that you have told me this," said

Kathleen ; “it shows that he is thinking, and that makes me hopeful, and gives me courage to go on praying.”

Just then George came in, and settled down into his chair with a serious look, as if he meant to give his whole attention to the subject in hand, and Michael began :—

There is yet one more sacrifice of the Jewish Church of which I have still to speak. Some of you may have wondered last Sunday, why I said nothing about the sacrifice of the Paschal lamb—the Passover—for, as you know, this was the greatest of the Jewish sacrifices. I am going to speak of it now, and although it may scarcely be necessary, let me begin by telling you its history.

You remember how the Patriarch Joseph was sold into Egypt, how his brethren followed him and were placed in the Land of Gessen, the Garden of Egypt to this day. After about one hundred and seventy years the descendants of Joseph and his brethren, the children of Israel, were reduced to the condition of slaves by the Egyptians. They were treated with dreadful cruelty, and at last, to prevent their becoming too numerous and powerful, a law was passed that all the male children were to be put to death. But it pleased God that one male child



should be saved by the king's daughter, and this child, Moses, grew up in the king's court. God, however, chose him to be the deliverer of the children of Israel out of Egypt. He was sent by God to King Pharaoh, and said to him : "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel : Let my people go that they may sacrifice to me in the desert."<sup>1</sup> But Pharaoh refused. Then Moses struck the land with plague after plague, with nine plagues. And then came the last of all. "At midnight the Lord slew every firstborn in the land of Egypt."<sup>2</sup> But He passed over the houses of the children of Israel, for He had told them by Moses and Aaron to take a lamb by their families, and to sacrifice it in the evening. These were His words : they were "to take the blood thereof, and put it on both the side posts, and on the upper door-posts of their houses wherein they shall eat it. And they shall eat the flesh that night, roasted at the fire, and unleavened bread with wild lettuce."<sup>3</sup> Further, God went on to say to His people : "You shall not eat thereof anything raw, nor boiled in water, but only roasted at the fire ; you shall eat the head with the feet and entrails thereof. Neither shall there remain anything of it until morning ; if there be

<sup>1</sup> Exod. v. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* xii. 29.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* xii. 7, 8.

anything left, you shall burn it with fire." <sup>1</sup> "And the blood shall be unto you for a sign, in the houses where you shall be; and I shall see the blood, and shall pass over you." <sup>2</sup> Then God commanded the children of Israel to celebrate this sacrifice every year for ever.

You know, then, how Moses led the children out of Egypt, how they walked on dry land through the Red Sea, and how God gave them the Ten Commandments by Moses. At last they reached the Promised Land, and were for a time governed by judges, then by kings. King Solomon, the wisest of men, built the Temple in Jerusalem. It was in this Temple, and here only, that the Jews offered their sacrifices. <sup>3</sup>

When the Jews dwelt in the Promised Land, the sacrifice of the Pasch was offered somewhat differently to the way in which it was offered on the night of the escape from Egypt; for those who came from a distance could not sprinkle the blood of the lamb on the doors of their own houses. Moreover, an order of priests had been established, and the lamb was sacrificed in the

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xii. 9, 10.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* xii. 13.

<sup>3</sup> According to Jewish tradition, the Temple was built on the mountain shown to Abraham in the "land of vision" (Gen. xxii. 2), on which he was to sacrifice Isaac. It was here that David offered sacrifice when the plague was stayed (2 Kings xxiv. 21).

Temple. It was then carried to the house in which it was to be eaten, was fastened to a cross of wood, or, as some say, on a wooden stake, and so roasted.<sup>1</sup>

And now I must ask you to compare this sacrifice with the other sacrifices of the Jewish Church. The blood of the victim was shed—hence it was a bloody sacrifice. The victim was entirely consumed ; and so it was a holocaust. And you will remark that it was to be consumed by eating ; but if it was not entirely eaten, that which remained was to be destroyed by fire.<sup>2</sup> This sacrifice had also the character of the sacrifice for sin, which was that the blood of the victim should be poured on the horns of the altar, and so offered up to God. Thus in this sacrifice, the shedding of blood was very marked ; as in the institution of the sacrifice of the Pasch, it is most noteworthy how the blood was to be sprinkled on the doorposts. Then, again, it had the mark of the peace-offering, which was the eating of the victim.<sup>3</sup>

Another thing to be noticed about the sacrifice of the Pasch is that the other sacrifices, those offered under the law of nature, as well as those of the Jewish law, all looked forward to the

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Edersheim, *The Temple : its Ministry and Services*, chap. xi.

<sup>2</sup> Exod. xii. 10.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* xii. 13.

Sacrifice of the Cross, whereas, in the first place, the sacrifice of the Pasch looked back. It looked back to the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt, and in another way it looked forward. For the slavery of the Jews in Egypt was a type, a figure of the slavery of man under the devil. As the children of Israel were delivered from the death of their firstborn, and so again from the slavery of Egypt through the blood of the Paschal Lamb, so this sacrifice also pointed forward to the deliverance of mankind from the slavery of the devil through the Blood of "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world."

So much, then, for the history of the sacrifice of the Paschal lamb, the great sacrifice of the Jewish Church, which gathered together the marks of the other bloody sacrifices, and led on to the Sacrifice of the Cross.

Now I want to tell you the story of the sacrifice of the Mass, the great sacrifice of the Christian Church, which continues, and points back to the Sacrifice of the Cross, only more powerfully than the sacrifices of the Old Law pointed forward to it. This Act of Sacrifice was always in the Sacred Heart of our Lord from the first moment of His Incarnation.<sup>1</sup> His

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xxxix. 8 ; Heb. x. 7, 9.

whole life led up to this sacrifice. You know that while on earth, as man, He led a life of perfect obedience. He was obedient to His parents, obedient to the civil government, even to the death of the Cross, obedient also to the Jewish Church. In all this He was doing the will of the Eternal Father. "I came down from heaven," He says, "not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me."<sup>1</sup> So in the last year of His public life He was still obedient.

In the autumn He went up to Jerusalem, for the Feast of Tabernacles. His teaching, His very presence aroused the wonder of the people, and the hatred of His enemies; it was at this time that He pardoned the woman taken in adultery. The Scribes and Pharisees hoped to catch Him breaking the law through His tenderness for sinners, but He put them to shame. It was then also that He gave sight to the man born blind.<sup>2</sup>

At the Feast of the Dedication of the Temple, He again went up to Jerusalem, and the Jews came to Him in the Temple, in Solomon's Porch, saying, "How long dost Thou hold our souls in suspense; if Thou be the Christ, tell us plainly." Jesus answered them, "I speak to you and you believe not."<sup>3</sup> They took up stones to stone

<sup>1</sup> St. John vi. 38.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* vii., viii., ix.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* x. 24, 25.



Him, and He went away again beyond Jordan. But then Lazarus fell sick, and his sisters sent to our Lord, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom Thou lovest is sick," and He came to Bethany and raised Lazarus from the dead. The chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council, and "from that day they devised to put Him to death.<sup>1</sup> Wherefore Jesus walked no more openly among the Jews, but went into a country near the desert, into a city that is called Ephrem, and there He abode with His disciples." He stayed there but a short time, for the Pasch of the Jews was at hand, and many from Palestine and other countries came up to Jerusalem. They sought, therefore, for Jesus, and as they stood plotting in the Temple they discoursed with one another, "What think you that He is not come to the festival day?" and the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment that if any man knew where He was, he should tell, that they might apprehend Him.

We then read of our Lord continuing His journey with His disciples, and coming to Jericho, where He gave sight to some blind men. He again spoke to His disciples, and said, "Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and all things shall be accomplished which were written by the prophets

<sup>1</sup> St. John xi. 53.



concerning the Son of man. For He shall be delivered to the gentiles, and shall be mocked, and scourged, and spit upon ; and after they have scourged Him they will put Him to death ; and the third day He shall rise again.”<sup>1</sup>

It was on a Friday that our Lord came to Bethany, a village on the slope of the Mount of Olives, on the further side from Jerusalem ; and here a supper was prepared for Him and His disciples.<sup>2</sup> On the following Sunday He rode in triumph to Jerusalem. That night He prayed in Gethsemani, and when the prayer was over went back to Bethany. On Monday He entered the Temple, and drove out the buyers and sellers. On Tuesday He went up to the Temple for the last time. In the court of the Gentiles, His enemies came to Him, hoping to put Him to confusion, before the people who had crowded round Him ; instead of which He put them to shame. “No man was able to answer Him a word, neither durst any man, from that day forth, ask Him any more questions.”<sup>3</sup> Then He turned to the people and told them to respect the authority of the Scribes and Pharisees, but to beware of their hypocrisy, and ended by pronouncing eight woes against the Scribes and

<sup>1</sup> St. Matt. xx. 18 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> St. John xii.

<sup>3</sup> St. Matt. xxii. 46, xxii., xxiii., xxiv.

Pharisees, as He had begun His preaching by eight blessings. He then cried out, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered together thy children, as the hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldst not! Behold, your house shall be left to you desolate. For I say to you, you shall not see Me henceforth, till you say, 'Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.' And Jesus being come out of the Temple went away." After this He spoke to His disciples about the destruction of the city and the end of the world. On the Wednesday it is generally thought that He stayed at Bethany, in the house of Lazarus, most probably with His Blessed Mother, while Judas went to the chief priests and agreed to betray his Lord.

All this while, as I have said, the Act of Sacrifice was ever in the Sacred Heart of our Lord, now soon to be consummated on the Cross. Meanwhile we see God working out His designs. Through the malice and envy and weakness of men, our Lord is to be crucified. But while the Jews reject Him, He is rejecting them.<sup>1</sup> While they put Him to death, He offers Himself up for the salvation of the world.

<sup>1</sup> This is shown by His cursing the fig-tree—a type of the Jews. St. Mark xi. 21.

On Thursday morning, Jesus sent St. Peter and St. John to prepare the Pasch. They will see, He tells them, a man carrying a pitcher of water. This reminds us that He had seen Judas going to the chief priests. While His Bloody Sacrifice of the Cross is being prepared, He will prepare also for His unbloody sacrifice. Then He went into the city with His disciples; the lamb was sacrificed, and roasted with fire. It was eaten in haste, with bitter herbs, and standing, in remembrance of the haste with which the Israelites had eaten it, on the night of their departure from Egypt. The flesh was cut from the bones, and the real Lamb of whom this was the type would see the figure of Himself in the victim, and how He would suffer and shed His Blood on the morrow.

He rose from table, washed the feet of His disciples, and then, "taking bread, He gave thanks, and brake and gave to them, saying, This is my Body which is given for you. Do this for a commemoration of Me. In like manner the chalice also, after He had supped, saying: This is the chalice, the New Testament in my Blood, which shall be shed for you." <sup>1</sup>

Let me quote the other accounts which we have of Christ's instituting this new sacrifice.

<sup>1</sup> St. Luke xxii. 19, 20.

“And whilst they were at table Jesus took bread and blessed and broke, and gave to His disciples, and said : Take ye and eat : This is My Body. And taking the chalice He gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of this. For this is My Blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for the remission of sins.<sup>1</sup> And again, “And whilst they were eating Jesus took bread, and blessing, broke, and gave to them, and said : Take ye, This is My Body. And having taken the chalice, giving thanks, He gave it to them. And they all drank of it. And He said to them : This is My Blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many.”<sup>2</sup> And lastly, the very remarkable testimony of St. Paul, when he says : “For I have received of the Lord<sup>3</sup> (mark the authority) that which also I delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread, and giving thanks, broke, and said : Take ye and eat ; this is My Body, which shall be delivered for you : this do for the commemoration of Me. In like manner also the chalice, after He had supped, saying : This chalice is the New Testament in My Blood : this do ye, as often as you shall drink, for the commemoration of Me. For as often as you

<sup>1</sup> St. Matt. xxvi. 26, 27.

<sup>2</sup> St. Mark xiv. 22, 23, 24.

<sup>3</sup> Our Lord now ascended to heaven.

shall eat this bread, and drink this chalice, you shall show the death of the Lord, until He come. Therefore, whoever shall eat this bread or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the Body and the Blood of the Lord.”<sup>1</sup>

Here, we see our Lord Jesus Christ instituting a new sacrifice in His Body, which was to be broken, in His Blood, which was to be shed, for the remission of sins. He says: “Do this for a commemoration of Me.” God had ordained that men should reach forward to the Sacrifice of the Cross by the sacrifices of the Old Law. And now He ordains that they shall reach backward to the Sacrifice of the Cross by this new sacrifice in commemoration of Him, showing the death of the Lord. We see Him offering sacrifice in bread and wine, a priest “according to the order of Melchisedech.”<sup>2</sup> This is the sacrifice of the New Law, of the New Testament, the sacrifice of the Mass. The Law is not destroyed but fulfilled by this perfect sacrifice, which has ever been offered in the Church of Christ, and is ever being offered in one part of the world or another, according to the prophecy of Malachias: “From the rising of the sun even to the going down, My name is great among the gentiles: and in every place there is sacrifice, and there

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. vi. 20.



is offered to My name a clean oblation, for My name is great among the gentiles, saith the Lord of Hosts.”<sup>1</sup>

“That’s a grand, magnificent thought,” exclaimed George, “the sacrifice of the Mass drawing men’s hearts to the Sacrifice of the Cross, and being offered up unceasingly throughout the world !”

“Well, George,” returned Father Eskdale, “I am glad that idea has struck you ; for you have discovered, I may say, my chief object in giving these lectures.”

“Still,” objected George, “it doesn’t seem to me that what our Lord did, and what He told the apostles to do, at the Last Supper, is like your Mass.”

“I had that difference in my mind, when I pointed out that the sacrifice of the Paschal lamb was offered in Jerusalem, where everything concerning the Jewish Church was done in perfection, in a different way from that in which it was done in Egypt.”

“I see,” answered George ; “that explains a good deal.”

“Again,” Father Eskdale went on, “if you saw a bishop ordaining priests, you would see the

<sup>1</sup> Malach. i. 2.



bishop and priests saying Mass together, which seems very different from an ordinary Mass. Then again, I think, if you were asked what our Lord did, at the Last Supper, you would say : 'He took bread and said : This is My Body which is broken for you. Then He took the chalice and said : This is My Blood of the New Testament, shed for you and for many for the remission of sins.' And I suppose you would say—for I don't know what you believe as to this—that He did what He said, and changed the bread and the wine into His Body and Blood. You would, I suppose, also add that this was an act of sacrifice, and therefore that in doing this, He offered Himself up for the salvation of the world."

"I don't know," said George, "that I should put it quite in that way ; but I will accept that. And now what would you say as to the sacrifice of the Mass ?"

"If any one asked me what the priest does at the sacrifice of the Mass," replied Father Eskdale, "I should say : 'He does what our Lord said was to be done at the Last Supper. He takes bread and wine ; he says over them the words of our Lord, and so he does what our Lord did. The bread is changed into the Body of Christ, and the wine into His Blood.'"

"That hasn't struck me," said George, "when I have been at Mass."

"It is true," said Father Eskdale, "that at Mass you don't hear the words, but surely you saw about the middle of Mass that every one bowed down ; you heard the bell rung, and you might have seen the priest raise the Blessed Sacrament, the Body of Jesus Christ, above his head, and then again the chalice with the Precious Blood."

"Yes, I saw that."

"Well, all Catholics know that it is the moment when the priest has just said the words of consecration, the words of our Lord. Perhaps this thought may help you : I always imagine that our Blessed Lord instituted the sacrifice of the Mass, looking across the table and facing the apostles. This seems natural and probable."

"Yes, I think so," agreed George.

"Many old altars, especially the Basilica altars in Rome, are so placed, that the priest does not turn his back to the people, but faces them ; and when he thus consecrates, it seems more like the Last Supper."

"Why, then," asked George, "does the priest turn his back to the people now ?"

"To tell you the truth, I never studied that question ; but it is easy to see that it is more

convenient in many ways when, as now, the tabernacle in which the Blessed Sacrament is kept is on the altar. Catholics are, however, always content with the arrangements the Church makes. We are all quite sure that there must be very good reasons for any such change."

"I feel that the authority of the Church is a real power with you," said George, "and I must confess that my belief in the authority of the Church of England has been shaken by a book which Casey the lawyer showed me. It is called *The Penal Laws against Papists and Popish Recusants*. Casey says this book was printed when an agitation was raised, to get these penal laws repealed. These laws showed distinctly how Queen Elizabeth was made head of the Church of England by Act of Parliament. He read to me the 1st of Elizabeth, the 1st and 2nd chapters."

"I know, George," said Father Eskdale. "You can't trust your soul to a Parliamentary Church, can you?"

"Not very well."

"You must come humbly into the old Church. Good-night ; God bless you."

Mrs. Bold had been watching her husband's face, praying the while, and, as her brother remarked, looking happier than she had done for a long time.

## LECTURE V

### DIFFICULTIES ANSWERED—THE NEW SACRIFICE

**G**EORGE BOLD had the *Eskworth Independent* in his hand when Michael O'Gorman came in the next Thursday evening.

"Do you see?" he said; "there are two letters here about Father Eskdale's lectures."

"Oh yes," replied Michael, "Father Eskdale told us all about them in this one which I am going to read to you. You needn't imagine that the objections they propose are anything new."

"Well, let us hear what Father Eskdale says."

So Michael read as follows :—

I had better begin this evening by answering two letters which I have received, one from the pen of a respected clergyman of the Established Church, the other written by a Wesleyan minister. Both these letters are worded in the

most courteous and kindly terms, and evidently in a spirit of sincerity ; and I hope, should my reply fail in other respects, that at least there may be in it no want of charity. I have much respect for those who put forth their objections with an honest desire to learn the truth. I may remark, however, as to the Church of England, that many of its ministers now claim the power of offering sacrifice. As you know, in these lectures I have pretty carefully avoided anything like controversy, and therefore I should have preferred if the objection urged in this first letter had been addressed to some clergyman of the Church of England who claims to be a sacrificing priest. Still, as it has been occasioned by this course of lectures, I wish to answer it in this one, because I am sure that the difficulty proposed is an honest one, and also because I do believe that it is a hindrance to many, and that truth comes out all the more clearly when such a difficulty is proposed and duly answered.

In the first place I must remind you that we Catholics learn our religion from the teaching of the Church, not from private interpretation of Scripture. We claim that Holy Scripture belongs to the Church, and that for the right interpretation of it we have to go to the Church. If a foreigner read our English laws, and then

wished to explain them to us in his own sense, we should say, "No ; we have through our own proper authority, through our judges and lawyers, the right explanation of them, and whatever the words of our laws may seem to *you* to mean, *we* can only understand them according to the meaning declared to us by proper authority." Still, as a devout and learned convert has said : "No Catholic is ever afraid of a text of Scripture" ; and for this reason : the Holy Ghost, who ever abides and teaches in the Church, inspired the different writers of Holy Scripture, and so there can never be any difference between the teaching of the Church and the right meaning of Holy Scripture.

Now then for the first letter. The writer argues that as the Sacrifice of the Cross is all-sufficient for the forgiveness of sins, therefore all sacrifice is now done away with ; and he quotes from St. Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews : Christ has obtained (by the Sacrifice of the Cross) "eternal redemption" ; and again : "Christ was offered once to exhaust the sins of many" ; and again : "We are sanctified by the oblation of the Body of Jesus Christ once."

Now consider. St. Paul was writing to Jews who had become Christians. We know how strongly they were attached to the worship of



their forefathers. They wished the bloody sacrifices of the Old Law still to go on ; and the apostle is intent on showing them what a mistake this was. I confess to having some sympathy with these convert Jews. They must have been among the best and most devout of their nation, and doubtless had been accustomed to offer up the sacrifices of their law with much religious fervour. Then, again, we know what a strong love the Jews had for their nation ; and they were a stiff-necked people. It was very hard for them to give up these sacrifices, to look upon them henceforth as worthless, and as what St. Paul called "weak and poor elements."<sup>1</sup> He is here insisting that in the Sacrifice of the Cross the only all-sufficient Victim is offered for our salvation ; that being all-sufficient, it was to be offered but once, and therefore the sacrifices of the Old Law, in which animals were offered and which were to lead men's minds to the Sacrifice of the Cross were done away with, seeing that their whole object and intention were gone. Had the bloody sacrifices been continued, it would have made men think that the Sacrifice of the Cross was insufficient without them. Their whole meaning had lain in this : that atonement for sin had to be made, but was

<sup>1</sup> Gal. iv. 9.

not yet made, so that to continue them after the Sacrifice of the Cross had been offered would have been an insult to that Sacrifice. No wonder then that St. Paul wrote vehemently against their continuance. Protestants are all agreed that we have to look back to the Sacrifice of the Cross, and to lay hold of it either by faith or in some other way. We Catholics look back to it, lay hold of it, and apply its merits to ourselves by the sacrifice of the Mass. In this way our faith in the Sacrifice of the Cross is kept alive. I have already quoted St. Paul's account of the institution of this new Sacrifice. In writing to the Corinthians he speaks of our having it; and to this I will return later on. But it would have been beside the question for the apostle to have treated of it when writing to the Hebrews. What he wanted to impress upon them was that the sacrifices of the Old Law, to which the Jewish converts still clung, were to be offered no more, that the Sacrifice of the Cross being once offered, bloody sacrifices were to cease. I hope that when I explain the sacrifice of the Mass more fully any further difficulty about the Sacrifice of the Cross being offered once for all, as though all sacrifice were in consequence to cease, will be satisfactorily answered. I cannot refrain here from bearing my testimony to the real love which

I believe my Protestant fellow-countrymen have for our Lord. They do look with reverence to His Sacrifice on the Cross, and they are jealous of anything which they think may seem to imply that the Sacrifice of the Cross was not all-sufficient. And again, I wish to bear testimony to the fact that I, and thousands in our day, who have been brought up as members of the Church of England and have become children of the Catholic Church, would have turned back again to the Church of England if we had found that the sacrifice of the Mass lessened the value of the Sacrifice of the Cross to us. But with one voice we all declare that by the sacrifice of the Mass we are led to the Sacrifice of the Cross as we never were before.

"I see, of course," interrupted George Bold, "that St. Paul was only writing about bloody sacrifices, and that it was enough for him to show that the sacrifices of the Old Law were done away with. I suppose if he could get his converts to see that, he would have no difficulty as to their accepting the sacrifice of the Mass."

But just here Father Eskdale came in, and hearing where they had got to, said—

"I should like to add a word. It is no wonder that St. Paul wrote so earnestly against the con-

tinuance of the bloody sacrifices after atonement for sin had been made by the Sacrifice of the Cross; for to continue them was the same as to say that the blood of our Lord, offered up for our sins, could not redeem us unless the blood of animals was also offered. Until our Lord had offered Himself on Calvary these old sacrifices drew men's minds with love and reverence, looking forward to the Sacrifice of the Cross—not in any way interfering with it. So, then, it is fitting that in the New Law we should have a sacrifice reaching back to the Sacrifice of the Cross more perfectly than they reached forward to it, our sacrifice not interfering with it, but making us feel as nothing else can how all-sufficient it is. The one thing St. Paul is driving at is that the bloody sacrifices must be done away with now that atonement for sin had been made by the blood of the Lamb of God. Nothing, in truth, could be more absurd and unworthy than to continue them under the New Law."

"Yes, Father Eskdale, I think that is quite satisfactory," said George.

"Then," said Michael, "I will go on."

The other letter urges that sacrifice is no longer to be offered, because Christ said to the woman of Samaria: "Woman, believe me, the hour

cometh when you shall neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, adore the Father. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true adorer shall adore the Father in spirit and in truth.”<sup>1</sup> Now Cardinal Bellarmine quotes this very passage to prove the truth of the sacrifice of the Mass. For, as he says in this place, *to adore* means, not as the objection supposes, to pray, to worship, but *to sacrifice*.<sup>2</sup> He shows that in Scripture the word sometimes has this meaning. Thus, Abraham says, in going to sacrifice, “After we have adored.” And St. John says, “Now there were certain gentiles among them that came up to *adore* on the festival day.” In the eighth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles we read that the Eunuch had come to Jerusalem to *adore*. In these places to adore means to sacrifice. Men could worship God in other ways wherever they liked ; but sacrifice could only be offered to God in Jerusalem. Now the Samaritans had built a temple on Mount Gerisim and offered sacrifice there ; and the question of the Samaritan is whether the right place to offer sacrifice was Mount Gerisim or Jerusalem. So when our Lord says, “The hour cometh, and now is, when the true adorer shall adore the Father in spirit and in truth,” we must understand Him to speak

<sup>1</sup> St. John iv. 21.<sup>2</sup> *De Missa*, lib. i. cap. xi.



of a sacrifice to be offered in spirit and in truth ; and, as He says, "neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem." He must be speaking of that sacrifice of which the Prophet Malachy says, that it is "a clean oblation," to be offered in every place. The true adorers are certainly Christians. The sacrifice to be offered in spirit and in truth takes the place of the Jewish sacrifices which were carnal, offered in the flesh of animals, and mere shadows, types, and figures—not the one true sacrifice. The sacrifice of the Mass is in *spirit*, for it is wrought by the Holy Spirit and by the words of consecration—and it is *true*, for it fulfils the figurative sacrifices of the Old Law. It is in this way that St. Chrysostom, St. Cyril, and others explain these words.

And note what our Lord says : "The hour cometh, and now is." He is therefore speaking of a new sacrifice which He is about to institute. Adoration meaning worship but not sacrifice was no new institution of our Lord's.

And now we may consider how perfect is this new sacrifice of which we have already seen the institution. In the first place we may note that the sacrifices of the Old Law being offered by the slaying of animals could not be offered as often and in every place as could the sacrifice of the New Law, which was instituted in bread and



wine for the Church of Christ throughout the world. Again, the victims, mere brute beasts, were unworthy to be offered to God. In the Mass our Lord Jesus Christ is the Victim. Moreover, these animals could not, of course, offer up themselves.

Now we must understand clearly that a sacrifice is made a sacrifice by this act of offering. In the Old Law there were many different kinds of sacrifice, but not one would have been a sacrifice without this act of offering. If, for instance, a priest had taken a lamb, had shed its blood, and had gone through all the outward acts of sacrifice without offering up the lamb to God, it would not have been a sacrifice at all. In the example I have given of the elder among the inhabitants of the island offering up the fruits of the island before the prince, or of the king's son going to prison for his brother-in-law, the act of offering is the chief thing on which all depends. Had the king's son gone to prison without offering himself for the young man, his going to prison would not have saved him.

Again, it was necessary, you remember, for the young man to offer up the king's son going to prison for him. Some learned people say, and it seems probable, that among pagan nations, human victims were offered for two reasons. The first

was that the most worthy victim possible might be offered, and the second that the victim should offer up himself. The account we have in Josephus of Abraham offering up Isaac is very remarkable.<sup>1</sup> Josephus was, as you know, in many ways a great authority. He was a Jew, well instructed in the religion of his people. He knew the traditions of the Jews as well as their holy books. He lived in the time of our Lord but never became a Christian, and was much associated with the Romans. He tells us that Isaac was at least twenty-five years old when Abraham was ordered to offer him up in sacrifice, and that Abraham instructed Isaac to offer up himself. And we may well believe that he did so looking forward to the Sacrifice of Calvary ; and it is to be noted that Isaac carried the wood of the altar on which he was to offer himself up. We should expect Josephus to leave out the Christian aspect of this sacrifice.

There is an inclination among men to sacrifice their own lives, offering themselves as victims, as we read in pagan history ; and probably it was with this intention that Hindoos would throw themselves beneath the wheels of the idol Jugger-naut, not knowing that God does not allow us to take away our lives.

<sup>1</sup> Josephus, *The Antiquities of the Jews*, book i. ch. x.

"I was thinking of that," put in George, "when we were hearing about Jewish sacrifices."

"Thinking of what?" asked Michael.

"Why, when a Jew offered sacrifice for sin, and saw the victim slain on the altar, he must have felt this: 'I sinned, I should have my throat cut, my blood should be shed, and I should be in the place of the lamb on the altar, and so offered to God.'"

"Yes, but you see," explained Father Eskdale, "you would not be a victim worthy to be offered to God. The offering of yourself could not satisfy the justice of God, and could not make atonement for your sins; besides, God does not allow us to kill ourselves."

"Yes, I see that," said George. And Michael went on:—

Sacrifice is not made sacrifice by the shedding of blood, nor by the death of the victim, but by this act of offering. So that if one of you had been on Calvary while our Lord was being crucified, and if some one had asked you, "Who is He on the Cross?" you would have said, "He is God the Son made man." And if you had been further asked what He was doing on the Cross, you would have answered, "He is offering Himself up for the sins of the world." When our

Lord instituted the new sacrifice, He said, "This is my Body which is given for you—shall be delivered for you.<sup>1</sup> This is the chalice, the New Testament in my Blood, which shall be shed for you."<sup>2</sup>

These are words of sacrifice. As our Lord spoke them it is clear that He was offering Himself up for us. He offers Himself but once. There is but this one act of offering in the Heart of our Lord—one offering at the institution of the sacrifice at the Last Supper—one and the same offering from the Sacred Heart as He hung upon the Cross—one and the same act of offering whenever the sacrifice of the Mass is offered. He is the Victim ever offering Himself up. A simile may help to make this more clear. A man in coining sovereigns has one die to stamp the different pieces of gold with, and the sovereigns are made by one and the same die being applied to the different pieces of gold.

Let me point out to you a passage from the learned and pious Cardinal Franzelin, and his treatise on the sacrifice of the Mass.<sup>3</sup> He points out that the Sacrifice of the Cross is a bloody and an absolute sacrifice, as theologians say, and that the sacrifice of the Last Supper, when the sacri-

<sup>1</sup> St. Luke xxii. 19.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 24.

<sup>3</sup> Franzelin, *De Sacrificio*, these xv. p. 385, Note i.

fice of the Mass was instituted, is an unbloody and relative sacrifice ; that is to say, it related to, it pointed forward to, that absolute and bloody sacrifice which our Lord was to offer of Himself on the next day. In like manner, when the same sacrifice is offered by the ministry of priests till the end of time, it is the unbloody and relative sacrifice pointing back to the Sacrifice of the Cross.

Now Franzelin says that the act of His will by which our Lord offered Himself up at the Last Supper included the act of His will by which He was to offer Himself up in the bloody Sacrifice of the Cross, and by which He was to offer Himself in all future sacrifices. In like manner, while He offered Himself on the Cross, He looked forward and included in that offering all the offerings to be made in future by the ministry of His priests when they offered the sacrifice of the Mass. This is shown in a prayer which many priests say before Mass, beginning, " O Lord Jesus Christ, with that Divine intention by which, in the Last Supper and on the altar of the Cross, Thou hast offered the Sacrifice of Thy Body and Blood to God the Father, I intend to offer the same sacrifice to Him." I have heard one say who attended Cardinal Franzelin's lectures in the Roman College, that



speaking of this act of offering he put it in this way : that as our Lord hung dying on the Cross He willed the offering, He willed the destruction of Himself as the Victim, He willed the application, He willed the eating.<sup>1</sup> Cardinal Franzelin quotes St. John Chrysostom on the words, "This is My Body." He says : "This word changes what is before Him [the bread and wine]. And as that other word 'Increase and multiply' was said once, but still gives power of generating to our nature for all time, so this word (This is My Body) once spoken makes a perfect sacrifice in all churches, on every table (altar), to our time and to the time of His coming."

I fear that this act of offering ever going on in the Sacred Heart of our Lord is but little thought of. If men did think of it, how could they stay away from Mass as they do ? May I tell you how the thought of it was awakened in my mind ?

Before I was ordained I was living for some time in a house with several priests. I found their conversation very edifying and instructive. Their hearts were in their work, and they often spoke of their poor people, grieving over those who neglected their religion, and rejoicing when they could tell of a sheep brought back to the

<sup>1</sup> "Voluit oblationem, voluit mactationem, voluit applicationem, voluit manducationem."



fold. Then I was struck by their love for children, and speaking of children and how to instruct them one of them said that he had called that day on an old lady, and that while he was there her married daughter came in with her little boy, just three years old. She said, "I just now went into St. Patrick's as the 'forty hours' exposition was going on. I knelt down to say a few prayers, and put this child on the seat beside me. Presently he began pulling at my sleeve, and pointing to the Blessed Sacrament he said, eagerly, 'Oh, Mother, look! look! there's Jesus—Jesus!' The old women about heard him, and were quite delighted."

Then one of the priests said very solemnly, "I cannot recollect the time when I did not believe." "Yes," said another, "belief in the Real Presence is firm and deep among our people; but I don't think they take in what sacrifice is. For instance, the other day a well-educated Catholic asked me why such great reverence was shown at the Consecration, since our Lord was already there present in the Tabernacle; and his question showed me that he did not understand that at the Consecration our Lord comes offering Himself as our Victim."

"I was lately dining with a good Catholic family," said another, "when the conversation turned upon this subject; and when I said that

many Catholics seemed to think that after the Consecration our Lord was on the altar, but doing nothing, they looked at me, evidently wanting to know what He was doing."

Here another priest joined in and said—

"I feel very much with you. When I was studying my theology the question of sacrifice had special interest for me; but after I was ordained I naturally felt as I never did before. It was when I began to say Mass that I got really to understand what I had been taught, how our Lord offers Himself for us at Mass. The professor of theology, who was learned and very devout, and also the spiritual father, used to say that when we saw our Lord on the altar, a victim, meek and helpless like a lamb, His Blood poured out in the chalice, this act of offering was going on in His Sacred Heart. I learned that my sins were laid upon Him, and that He, with burning love, was offering Himself to the Eternal Father for me; I learned too how the prayers of the Church are the prayers of the Sacred Heart. When I say, just after the Consecration, 'offerimus,' we offer, I always feel how our Lord is offering Himself for us while we offer Him to the Eternal Father; so that in this act of offering our hearts are in union with His Sacred Heart."

And then I recollect one of the priests saying

that of course most of those who are present at Mass do not exactly follow the prayers ; but we frequently hear how those not of our religion are struck by the deep, rapt devotion of our people during the Holy Sacrifice. There is a noble passage in one of Thackeray's works. Thackeray was a deep-thinking man and a shrewd observer ; he had made a tour in Ireland, and in this passage expressed how greatly he was struck with the fervour of prayer and devotion that he witnessed at Mass on a Sunday. After all there is no way of learning what Mass is like assisting at the Holy Sacrifice. So I believe that, by the grace of God, although our poor people are often ignorant, they do get to know and feel that when our Lord becomes present on the altar He offers Himself up to God the Father for our sins, and that they join in this act and offer Him up and themselves with Him.

Still I must in truth add that in this conversation these good priests agreed as to the great ignorance that exists on this subject, and in consequence of this ignorance how common is the sin of missing Mass on Sundays. But I feel sure that no man with any real faith, and understanding what Mass is could do so.

With regard to the prayers of the Church in the Ordinary of the Mass, if you read them care-

fully you will notice that in the first prayer after the Consecration, calling to mind our Lord's Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension, we offer Him to God the Father, a pure Host, a holy Host, an immaculate Host, the holy Bread of eternal life and the chalice of everlasting salvation. Then in the next prayer we beg with confidence that the Eternal Father will look down on this Victim; we remind Him that as He accepted other victims offered to Him—victims so little worthy in themselves, and only worthy as being types and figures of this true Victim, as He accepted the offering of Abel, the just one, the offering of Abraham, and that holy sacrifice, that immaculate host which Melchisedech offered—so much more will He accept this our offering. And so confident are we that God the Father will accept it that we next pray Him to order that this our Victim may be carried by the hands of His holy angels and laid on His altar on high, under the eyes of His Divine Majesty. Then we pray God to give to those who have gone before us in the sign of faith and who sleep in peace a place of refreshing light and peace. After praying for the faithful departed the priest, speaking aloud and striking his breast, prays also for us sinners: "*Nobis quoque peccatoribus.*" He prays, and all present

pray with Him, that through the multitude of God's mercies He will give us part and share with the apostles and martyrs, that is, with those who have suffered and died for Christ, who have offered themselves up to God as victims with Him who died for us.

As Michael finished reading, he, Mrs. Bold, and Father Eskdale all looked at George, who sat in silence, in deep thought.

"What are you thinking of, George?" asked Father Eskdale at last.

"I can't put my thoughts well into words. I have two thoughts in my mind—one is, how awful it is to think of that offering always going on in our Lord's Heart. Then it is dreadful that so many don't know of it, and that of those who do know, so many don't think of it. Why, one would say that act of offering must draw the hearts of the whole world into it."

"What is the other thought?"

"Well, I confess it was that while you were telling of those priests talking of the sacrifice of the Mass, and how people should join in that act of offering, I felt as I never felt before that the religion of those priests is altogether a different religion from ours. I could not imagine a knot of clergymen of the Church of England talking in that way—although——"



"Well, George, you are expressing yourself capitally. Go on."

"If you will have it—though perhaps this is not expressing it capitally—I was going to say, now that your lectures are in print, that I daresay we shall soon have a little book for the use of members of the Church of England, with a nice explanation of this act of offering, and every now and then a word put in to make believe that they knew of it all along."

"I wish you would do something for me, George," said Father Eskdale.

"Of course I will," answered George; "anything I can."

"Well, then, come to my Mass to-morrow morning at seven o'clock, and join in this act of offering."

"Father Eskdale, I will," promised George, taking his friend's hand.

"Then, Mrs. Bold, I will ask a favour of you, too. Don't be too anxious about your child; trust him to God, his guardian angel, and your little servant, and come to Mass with George."

Kathleen promised with tears in her eyes, and as Father Eskdale rose to take leave George asked him to stop and explain one more point. He said, "I was in our old parish church to-day with our doctor, and was pointing out to him



where the altars stood formerly. He looked upon their having been there as an abuse. I said that there must have been several priests attached to the church before the Reformation, and that all would want to say Mass every day."

"That was quite right," said Father Eskdale.

"But he argued, 'What could be the good of that, as there would not be a congregation?' I told him that Mass was not like our service, having prayers read for the people. What more could I have said?"

"Perhaps you might have put it in this way. The offence of sin is constantly rising up from the earth before God. It is a great blessing to have a pure oblation, the sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ—the constant offering from His Sacred Heart ever rising as an odour of incense before God. So even if there is no congregation, a devout priest can never forego the offering of the spotless Victim, 'the Lamb who taketh away the sins of the world.'"

"Yes, I think I see it now. How slow I am to take in the thought of sacrifice and the blessedness of it! It is, as you say, a new idea to us. Anyhow, Father Eskdale, I'll come to-morrow, and I'll do my best to join in your sacrifice."

"Good-night," said Father Eskdale. "God bless you."

## LECTURE VI

### ENTERING INTO THE SACRIFICE—THANKSGIVING

**G**EORGE was true to his word, and the next morning, which was the first Friday of the month, he and his wife were kneeling side by side, while Father Eskdale celebrated the early Mass. Kathleen's heart was very full, and it seemed to her that until then she had never entered thoroughly in that great act of offering of our Lord's Sacred Heart. With her head bowed down in fervent prayer, she poured out her heart as she had never done before. George kept his eyes fixed on the altar, watching attentively every movement of the priest as with great reverence and recollection he offered the Holy Sacrifice. They walked home in silence, and during the week George never once alluded to that morning.

Kathleen prayed on. She noticed that her husband was more silent than usual, and that

he seemed preoccupied. She asked him no questions, but went quietly about her household duties, making his home bright, and trying to forestall his every wish. The next Thursday evening George came home earlier than usual. All was snug and cheerful in the little parlour when Father Eskdale arrived, and though George greeted him in his usual frank, friendly way, there was a respectful seriousness in his manner which seemed to his wife as if he were beginning to understand something of the dignity of the priesthood. As no one appeared inclined to talk, Michael began to read at once :—

In my last lecture I was speaking to you of the act of our Lord's Sacred Heart by which He offers Himself to the Eternal Father for our sins, and how it is always one and the same act of offering in the sacrifice of the Mass, always going on in one part of the world or another. Again, it is one and the same act of offering by which He offered Himself for us when He died upon the Cross, and one and the same act by which He offered Himself when He instituted the sacrifice of the Mass at the Last Supper. When we see this we understand better what the Council of Trent teaches, namely, that the Sacrifice of the Cross and the sacrifice of the Mass are one

and the same Sacrifice, differing only in the manner of offering.

When once we begin to think of this act of offering in the Sacred Heart it is difficult to leave off thinking of it. How wonderful, how awful is it that our Lord Jesus Christ should offer Himself up for us sinners! And while we wonder, we must love. "I live in the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and delivered Himself for me."<sup>1</sup> When He comes into the world, in the first moment of His Incarnation, as soon as He has a body, a soul, a heart like ours, He tells us that He comes to offer Himself for us. "Therefore, coming into the world, He saith : Sacrifice and oblation Thou wouldst not"—that is, the sacrifices of the Old Law—"but a body Thou hast fitted to me. Holocausts for sin did not please Thee ; then said I : Behold I come."<sup>2</sup>

Words can scarcely be plainer than these. Still, I will venture to give the paraphrase, the putting into everyday language these words of the apostle, who is here quoting Psalm xxxix. Entering the world by the Incarnation, Jesus Christ thus speaks to God the Father : 'Sacrifice and oblation and holocausts for sin Thou wouldst not have, but a body Thou hast given Me fit to

<sup>1</sup> Gal. ii. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Psa. xxxix. 8 ; Heb. x. 7, 9.

be sacrificed, fit for immolation. Behold, here I am, O God, that I should do Thy will, according to that which has been foretold in the Scriptures concerning Me.' <sup>1</sup>

He came into the world to offer Himself, and how He longed for the hour of sacrifice we know by His own words: "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" I need hardly say that our Lord is here speaking of His Passion, and when at last the hour was come He said: "With desire have I desired to eat this pasch with you before I suffer." <sup>2</sup>

If we could but enter into the Sacred Heart of Jesus so as to know and feel how He loves to offer Himself up as a Victim for us, it would be somewhat as when we stand and gaze on a torrent of water rushing along in overwhelming volume—even while we shrink, we can scarcely resist the impulse to throw ourselves into it. Or, again, how could we stand unmoved on a field of battle, watching a hero fighting for justice and truth, and knowing that he is fighting to save us from our direst foe. He conquers, but as he conquers he dies. Could we resist throwing ourselves into the conflict in order to die with him? Even so would our Lord draw us into

<sup>1</sup> Triplex Expositio, Piconio,      <sup>2</sup> St. Luke xii. 20, xxii. 15.

this act of offering, into this tremendous sacrifice. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to Myself. Now this He said, signifying what death He should die."<sup>1</sup> While He offers Himself up we must offer ourselves with Him. He is our King, our Captain, our Leader. He is first and foremost in the fight; shall we not follow Him? And above all, when we see one who is by His side in the thickest of the battle, His Blessed Mother, of whom holy Simeon prophesied that when her Son should be a sign which should be contradicted a sword should pierce her soul. She followed her Divine Son step by step to Calvary. "She stood by the Cross, and when men fled, there she intrepid stood." St. Ambrose says that while her Son was hanging on the Cross the Mother offered herself to His persecutors.<sup>2</sup> There she offered up her Son while He offered Himself, for her heart was always one with His Heart. The Feast of the Seven Dolours, properly called the Feast of the Compassion, that is, the feast of Mary's suffering *with* her Son, teaches us this great lesson. The beautiful hymn called the *Stabat Mater*, which you all know, is read during Holy Mass on that day. Now the burden of this hymn is a prayer that we, entering into

<sup>1</sup> St. John xii. 32.

<sup>2</sup> Roman Breviary, Office of the Seven Dolours.



His Sacrifice, may, like His Blessed Mother, suffer with Christ. We pray the Blessed Virgin to fix deeply in our hearts the wounds of Him who is crucified, and to let us stand with her near the Cross and join in her sorrow, 'share her pains,' that we may be partners in the Passion of her Son, and so, as St. Paul says, "fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ." <sup>1</sup>

Had we been in Jerusalem on the day of the Crucifixion, should we not have gone with the Mother of Jesus, as St. John and St. Mary Magdalen did, to Calvary? Let us, then, go with her to the Sacrifice of the Altar, on which our Lord offers Himself for us, and she will teach us how to enter into this act of offering. As our Lord looked down from the Cross on His Blessed Mother and His beloved disciple, and said, "Woman, behold thy Son," so when with her we enter into this sacrifice and offer ourselves up with Him, will He look down on us and say, "Behold thy Mother." Then with Mary we shall leave this sacrifice, firmly resolved to take up our cross daily and follow Christ; and doing this, we shall find how truly His yoke is easy and His burden light, and we shall learn to love the Cross. St. Andrew, when he saw the cross on

<sup>1</sup> Col. i. 24.

which he was to die, cried out, "O good Cross that hast been so honoured by the limbs of the Lord! O Cross, which I have so long desired, loved so tenderly, and never ceased to seek! Now at last I see thee prepared for my hungering soul. Take me away from men and restore me to my Master, so that He may receive me from thee, who redeemed me through thee." <sup>1</sup>

If it is not given to us to rise to such transports of love as this, we may at least leave the sacrifice of the Mass, striking our breasts, and ready to take up the crosses which God may offer to us day by day. We must remember that we are soldiers of Jesus Christ, that Mary leads on the white-robed army of martyrs, and when the priest says the prayer, "*Nobis quoque peccatoribus*," we should join with him, and pray that we may have some part and share in their martyrdom.

Michael paused, and George Bold exclaimed 'I must say this doctrine of sacrifice, like what you have said about the Blessed Virgin, seems to fit in very naturally with the Bible.'

"Yes, George," returned Father Eskdale; "and doesn't it give a life and power to many passages which you never realized before?"

"Oh yes, I do feel that."

<sup>1</sup> Roman Breviary, Office of St. Andrew.

When we kneel before the altar during Mass (continued Michael), we are drawn into this offering of love. The ardent desire and longing of the Sacred Heart is to inflame our hearts with this Divine love, and to draw us into this act of sacrifice. "I am come to send fire upon the earth: and what will I, but that it may be kindled?"<sup>1</sup> For this our Lord knows that we need strength which He alone can give, and He gives us this strength through Divine food. "Take eat, this is my Body which is broken for you." This He said when He instituted the sacrifice of the New Law. And speaking of this mystery in the synagogue of Capharnaum, He said, "I am the Bread of Life, and the Bread which I will give is my flesh for the life of the world."

You see, then, that in order to be drawn into this act of offering in the most perfect manner, we should receive our Lord into our hearts in Holy Communion.

Holy Communion is the completion of the Sacrifice of the Cross. But that we may fully understand this, allow me to recall to your minds and sum up what I have already said about the sacrifices of the Old Law.

You will remember that there were three great kinds of sacrifice—the Holocaust, in which the

<sup>1</sup> St. Luke xii. 49.

victim was wholly destroyed ; the Sacrifice for Sin, marked by the offering up of the blood ; and the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, or Peace-offering, which was distinguished by the eating of the victim.

Each kind of sacrifice had its own lesson and motive—the Holocaust meaning that men should be wholly consecrated to God ; the Sacrifice for Sin that satisfaction must be made for sin by the blood of the victim. When atonement had been made men would naturally desire to thank God, to be at peace with Him, and one with Him. Hence the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, or Peace-offering, in which he who offered ate of the victim consecrated to God, thus making himself one with it and giving himself wholly to God.

The most solemn sacrifice of the Paschal lamb, which included the motives of these three kinds of sacrifice, taught the same great lessons. In it the victim was to be wholly destroyed, if not by being eaten, then by fire ; the blood was sprinkled on the door-posts, and those who offered partook of the victim.

We see, then, that these sacrifices were types and shadows, of which the Sacrifice of Calvary was the fulfilment and the reality. Now as they looked forward and reached forward to the Sacrifice of the Cross, so must we have a sacrifice which looks back and reaches back to

it. St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, teaches that perfect atonement for sin having been made by the Sacrifice of the Cross, bloody sacrifices must cease. While they went on men understood that satisfaction for sin had not yet been made ; but when it had been made, although bloody sacrifices should cease, man would still need a sacrifice to remind him that he had been redeemed by the shedding of blood. A sacrifice such as that of the Mass exactly corresponds with what we desire, and gives us even more than we could have hoped for. In it our Lord's Body and Blood are offered to God. The blood of the victim, in a manner poured forth by the separate consecration, is not shed afresh, but is shed mystically—that is, in mystery, not in the way in which it was poured forth on the Cross. This sacrifice, therefore, completes and perfects for us the whole sacrificial system of the Old Law. It brings us to the Sacrifice of the Cross, and it applies that sacrifice to us. Surely, now, we understand the meaning of our Lord's words when He instituted this sacrifice, "Do this for a commemoration of me."

"Might I stop you a minute?" broke in George Bold; "I want to see if I take all that in. I have got quite interested in the sacrifices of the Old Law, and I think I see that, taking them all to-



gether as a system, they do express in figure what we need in sacrifice, and that all this is fulfilled in the Sacrifice of the Cross."

"Yes, that is quite right," agreed Father Eskdale.

"Then am I to understand that the sacrifice of the Mass also embraces and fulfils all the sacrifices of the Old Law, and that it carries us back to the Sacrifice of the Cross as the old sacrifices carried men forward to it?"

"Yes, that's it exactly; you speak like a book."

"But what I want to be sure of is this: It seems that some things in the old sacrifices were more to the fore than others, particularly the shedding of blood; and that was natural, as shedding of blood was for the remission of sin. But as sin has been atoned for by the Blood of Christ, now we only need His Blood to be applied to us. Therefore the shedding of blood in our sacrifice is mystical in figure, though the blood is of course really the Blood of Jesus Christ, as He said, "shed for many for the remission of sins."

"Why, George, your wife is looking quite proud, you are putting it so well!"

"I suppose that the Holocaust, by which we show forth our entire dependence on God, is always the first great thought in sacrifice; and as in the Old Law the victim of the Holocaust was



consumed by fire, so in our sacrifice the Victim is wholly consumed. Is that right ?”

“Yes ; and in this it is like the consuming of the paschal lamb, which was by eating, or, if not wholly eaten, it was consumed by fire. I want to show in this lecture that in our sacrifice there is no shedding of blood, as in the Jewish sacrifice, but that the thank-offering or peace-offering comes more forward, because we have to thank God for having redeemed us.”

“All that seems to me very beautiful,” replied George, “showing the religion of the New Testament as carrying on to perfection that of the Old. I beg pardon, though, for interrupting you, Michael ; please go on.”

In the sacrifice of the Mass our Lord is destroyed as a Holocaust ; His Blood is mystically shed and offered up in atonement, His Body is eaten. He is our Peace-offering, as the angels sang to the shepherds that on earth there should be “peace to men of goodwill.” After the Sacrifice on the Cross Christ rose to life again, bringing peace : “Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, Peace be to you.”

In the Mass we are constantly reminded of peace. At the beginning the priest and his server are at some distance from the altar ; the priest, like the publican our Lord speaks of, stands “afar

off," with head bowed down, and strikes upon his breast, acknowledging himself to be a sinner. In the same way the server for the congregation makes confession of sin. Then comes the mutual prayer for forgiveness, after which the priest mounts up to the altar in confidence, looks up to heaven, then kisses the altar, for there peace is to be made between earth and heaven. Then the priest and people (for the server answers for them) cry out together for mercy in the *Kyrie Eleison*, and immediately afterwards he bursts forth into the *Gloria*, "Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth!" He often kisses the altar—a kiss is the sign of peace—and at High Mass this act is much more marked, the deacon kissing the priest's hand and what he presents to him. We notice this particularly when the book is carried to him after the Gospel has been sung, and in the kiss of peace given just before Communion. This character of peace comes out again, especially after the *Pater Noster*, in the prayer, "Mercifully grant peace in our days." Then the priest says aloud, "May the peace of the Lord be always with you"; and the server answers, "And with thy spirit." Then comes the *Agnus Dei*, which ends with the words, "Give us peace." The next prayer begins, "O Lord Jesus Christ, who hast said to Thy apostles, 'Peace I leave to you, My peace I give to you'"; and

we pray Him to give peace to His Church. Surely, then, the Mass is a peace-offering.

It is also a sacrifice of thanksgiving, for in the Old Law the peace-offering and the offering of thanksgiving were one and the same sacrifice. We constantly speak of the Blessed Sacrament as the Blessed Eucharist. Now Eucharist means thanksgiving. Before instituting this sacrifice our Lord "gave thanks"; so we, just before the *Canon*, the most solemn part of the Mass, have a grand act of thanksgiving called the *Preface*. The priest begins thus, "Let us give thanks to the Lord our God." The server, or the choir at High Mass, answer for the people, "It is meet and just," after which the priest continues, "It is truly meet and just, right and salutary, that we should always, and in all places, give thanks." This he does, both before consecrating the bread and before consecrating the wine. He receives the Precious Blood in thanksgiving, saying as he takes the chalice, "What shall I render to the Lord for all that He hath rendered unto me?" We are also reminded of thanksgiving by the words *Deo Gratias* (Thanks be to God). These words are repeated several times during the Mass, which also ends with them.

It is surely fitting that the great sacrifice of the New Law should be a peace-offering and a sacrifice of thanksgiving, for until atonement for sin

had been made by the Sacrifice of the Cross holy men groaned under the weight of sin. They longed for the redemption of Israel. The blood of animals had constantly to be shed, showing that satisfaction had yet to be made by the Blood of Christ. But when once this satisfaction had been made, men looked back to the Sacrifice of the Cross with hearts overflowing with thanksgiving. So, rightly then, the Mass is full of thanksgiving. It has another mark of the old Jewish sacrifice in that the Victim is eaten: "Take eat, this is My Body."<sup>1</sup>

It is to this eating of the Victim that I shall call your attention in the next lecture.

"It seems to me, Father Eskdale," said George, "that Holy Communion in your Church is really too awful."

"I quite understand your thinking that, and we ought to draw near to our Lord with all reverence. But as He commands us to come, we must fear to stay away; and when we come in love, you know that love casts out fear."

"You Catholics must love Him very much."

"We ought to, my dear George. It is sad that we don't love Him more."

<sup>1</sup> St. Thomas of Aquin says that the eating of the victim corresponds to the burning of the victim in the holocaust (Comm. on 1 Cor. x.).

## LECTURE VII

### HOLY COMMUNION

**G**EORGE and Kathleen had heard the last of the course of lectures in the church ; nevertheless, George had begged Father Eskdale to come and talk it over with them, while Michael read it out as usual, adding, " Perhaps Father Russell would come too. You know it will be our last Thursday evening."

George's honest face told of real regret as he said this, for he had greatly enjoyed these talks. He had begun to study the penny Catechism, and had quite made up his mind to be received into the Church. To Kathleen's great joy, Father Eskdale had baptized her child conditionally and had supplied the ceremonies. He had explained them to George, who quite took in their meaning. He was anxious that Father Eskdale should receive him into the Church ; but this could not be. It was clear that the health of the young



religious was pretty well set up again, and his provincial wanted him badly for a big mission that was to begin on the following Sunday. Still, when he and Father Russell arrived at George Bold's every one looked very happy ; and Michael O'Gorman began to read :—

Although the essence of sacrifice is in the act of offering, for the completion of the sacrifice the victim must be destroyed and consumed. I have hitherto been considering in these lectures what it is that makes a sacrifice to be a sacrifice. As an example we may take a sovereign. It is not the metal in itself that makes the coin. The metal might be made into many other things. It is, as philosophers say, the matter of the sovereign. But when that matter receives the stamp which gives to it the image of the Queen, then it is made a sovereign. So it is the act of offering that makes the sacrifice.

But George demurred. "Is it not," he asked, "the killing of the victim that makes the sacrifice ? If I saw a priest cutting the throat of a lamb at the altar I should say that he was sacrificing the lamb."

"Yes," replied Father Eskdale ; "just because he is a priest, and is cutting the throat of the



lamb at the altar, you would say he is sacrificing—that is, he is offering up the lamb as a victim to God. If you saw a butcher doing precisely the same act in his yard, you would never think that he was sacrificing.”

Then Michael continued :—

That the victim must in some manner be destroyed and consumed is the law of all sacrifices. You remember how under the Jewish system the victim was killed, the blood poured forth, and then it was consumed by fire or a part of it was eaten. And in the sacrifice of the Mass, as I explained to you, by the separate consecration of the Body and Blood the Blood is shed and poured forth mystically, and the victim is consumed by being eaten.

Not only is this eating of the victim the law of sacrifice, but we have another motive for obeying this command of love : “Take, eat, this is My Body.” When we kneel before the altar, while our Victim offers Himself for us, we offer ourselves with Him, and desire to become, as far as may be, one with Him. Now by eating Him I obey His command, I enter into His act of sacrifice, and I make it mine as far as possible. What we eat becomes one with us, and we one with it. If this be true of our natural food, how much

more of this our heavenly food ! The natural food we eat is changed into us : but we are changed into our heavenly food. "For we being many are one bread, one body all who partake of one bread."<sup>1</sup> The eating of this bread is "the partaking of the Body of the Lord." This passage may be rendered, according to a note in the Douay Bible, "Because the bread is one, all we, being many are one body, who partake of that one bread." For it is by our communicating with Christ and with one another in this Blessed Sacrament that we are formed into one mystical body.

It is, then, by eating the Victim that we enter in the most perfect way into this sacrifice and complete it. So necessary is this consuming of the Victim, that if a priest at Mass were taken ill after the consecration, another priest, even if he had broken his fast, would have to complete the sacrifice by eating the Victim.

This doctrine comes out in the history of the early Church. When the apostles went forth to preach the religion of Jesus Christ in the world, sacrifice was, as you know, the great act of worship, whether among the Jews or the Gentiles. Pagans, as we have seen, offered sacrifice to idols. They offered as victims the best animals they

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. x. 17.

could get, and after the sacrifice the flesh of these animals was sold in the market. Now a difficulty arose among the Christian converts as to whether they might eat of the flesh of those victims, for they feared, by doing so, to enter into the pagan sacrifices. This difficulty was settled in the first Council of the Church. We read of it in the Acts of the Apostles. It was decreed, "that they who from the gentiles are converted to God refrain themselves from the pollution of idols."<sup>1</sup> This same matter was referred to St. Paul by the Corinthians. These Corinthian converts knew, of course, that the idols were nothing, and so they might plead that there was no harm in eating victims offered to them. St. Paul, in his answer, relies on the decree of the Church. Mark well his words, for they are full of instruction for us. He says that in the sacrifices of the Old Law "they who eat of the sacrifices are partakers of the altar; but the things which the heathen sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils and not to God. And I would not that you should be made partakers with devils; you cannot drink of the chalice of the Lord and of the chalice of devils; you cannot be partakers of the table of the Lord and of the table of devils."<sup>2</sup>

This eating of victims offered to idols was a

<sup>1</sup> Acts xv. 19, 20.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. x. 18, 19, 20.

standing difficulty in those times. We meet with it again in the warning to the angel (that is the bishop) of the Church of Thyatira—"because thou permittest to eat of things offered to idols"<sup>1</sup>; and it would seem that the same complaint was made against the Church of Pergamus.

It is clear, from all this, that in the times of the apostles sacrifice was not done away with among the Christians. It is evident that they had their sacrifice, as the Jews and the heathen had theirs. This completes the answer to the difficulty raised, that sacrifices were to cease after the Sacrifice of the Cross.

"Would you," asked George, at this point, "please put together all the answer to that difficulty, for even after your disposing of those two letters in the fifth lecture, I have heard the same objections again?"

"Yes, I am afraid Protestants will always go back again and again on that matter, as they do upon others, although the answer has been given often enough. Well, then, St. Paul wants to make the convert Jews understand that bloody sacrifices have been done away with since the Sacrifice of the Cross. He says that they were imperfect and never could atone for sin, their

<sup>1</sup> Apoc. ii. 20.

whole object being to point forward to the perfect Sacrifice, when atonement would be fully made and there would be plenteous redemption. In his First Epistle to the Corinthians he is speaking unmistakably of the Christian Sacrifice when he tells of its institution as revealed to him by our Lord Himself. 'This is My Body which shall be delivered for you—do this for a commemoration of Me. For as often as you shall eat this bread and drink this chalice, you shall show the death of the Lord until He come.' And as he is finishing his Epistle to the Hebrews he says, 'We have an altar, whereof they have no power to eat who serve the tabernacle.'<sup>1</sup> Now if we Christians have an altar, we must have a sacrifice."

"Yes, I think I see now how to settle that objection. Go on now, Michael, please. I think we are coming to the part I like so much about Holy Communion. It was all such a new light to me."

Again, we see in the doctrine of sacrifice that, as the victim was given up to the Being to whom the sacrifice was offered, therefore he who ate of the victim, making himself one with it, entered into that act of offering, and, consecrated, devoted

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xiii. 10.



himself to the Being to whom the sacrifice was offered.

If, then, men took part in the Jewish and in the pagan sacrifices by eating the victim, how much more perfectly do we take part in our sacrifice in the same manner. For in all former sacrifices the act of offering could not be made by the animals themselves, whereas we receive our Victim offering Himself up from the altar. When we receive Him we have but to pray Him to draw us into His act of offering, and to give us grace and strength to offer ourselves with Him. We read in Holy Scripture how "the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David."<sup>1</sup> How much more in Holy Communion must our souls be knit with the soul of our Lord! In order to have life in us, we must eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood. "He that eateth Me, the same shall live by Me." Still, as our Lord said to His disciples after the same sermon, "It is the spirit that quickeneth"<sup>2</sup>—that is, it is the soul and divinity of Christ which give us life. I have often thought that if men had such thoughts in their minds in offering up Mass with the priest, they would always long to go to Holy Communion, as the Council of Trent desired that all should

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings xviii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> St. John vi. 64.



do who assist at Mass. With such thoughts they would have no difficulty in praying to our Lord when they had received Him.

You may perhaps have heard of Father Balthasar Alvarez. He was a very holy man, who helped St. Teresa very much. She once had a vision concerning him, by which it was revealed to her that he was in a higher state of grace than any one then living in the world, though at that time there were living several who are now canonized saints. This Father Balthasar did not like to see persons reading in their prayer-books immediately after they had received our Lord in Holy Communion. I quite feel with him in this. We don't receive a friend by reading out of a book to him. As on the Cross our Lord calls Himself our Friend—"A man hath no greater love than this, that he lays down his life for his friend"<sup>1</sup>—so, too, in the sacrifice of the Mass He is our Friend. He comes to us with a love beyond the love of all friends. If when you receive Him you feel dry and distracted, I would recommend you to make an act of faith in your own words, somewhat in this way: 'O Lord Jesus, Thou hast come to me as a little piece of bread, but I firmly believe that Thou art God the Son, who came down from heaven, who was

<sup>1</sup> St. John xv. 13.

born of the Blessed Virgin, and was made man for me. I believe that I have now received Thee, O Lord, who didst die on the Cross for me. Now Thou hast come to me offering Thyself to the Eternal Father for me. O Lord, I would offer myself with Thee and to Thee.' Then you might go on and say, 'I would if I could, O Lord, speak to Thee as Thy friends did when Thou wast on earth as man.'

I only venture to suggest some such way of praying to our Lord as this, meaning of course that in so doing you should use your own words and speak to our Lord in your own way. What I desire chiefly is, that through entering thoroughly into the sacrifice of the Mass, and through understanding that our Lord offers Himself for all and for each of us, you may, as you kneel before the altar, be able to feel—'He is on the altar now ; He knows me ; He is thinking of me ; my sins are upon Him.' You think of all your sins, especially when you see the priest spread his hands over the bread and wine which he is about to consecrate, as in the Old Law the Jewish priest put his hands on the head of the victim, thus putting the sins of those for whom the sacrifice was offered on the victim. Then you call to mind the sins you have last fallen into. All those sins He has taken upon Himself, and you

say, 'He loves me and is offering Himself for me.' Then the desire comes into your heart, 'O that I could offer myself with Him !' And you think, 'If I could but receive Him into my heart, and be drawn into His Sacred Heart !' Surely then you could speak to Him as friend speaks to friend, for indeed He is your best Friend. In this way, we get really "to know Him in the breaking of bread." <sup>1</sup> We can speak to Him then with simple familiarity, and with all confidence, and tell Him of all we want for ourselves and for those we love. We have only to take care that as we get to know our Lord more, we should love Him more, loving Him the more that He makes Himself so little for us. St. Bernard says, "The Lord is great, and worthy to be praised, but also, the Lord is little and worthy to be loved ; and the more He makes Himself poor and despised for me, the dearer He is to me." For this very reason the more must we reverence Him.

When you come to receive Jesus Christ in church, the very act of approaching the sanctuary fills you with reverence ; especially as you have lately been to Confession in order to prepare yourselves for Holy Communion. But I confess I have often been pained by the want of reverence

<sup>1</sup> St. Luke xxiv. 35.

shown to our Lord when He is carried to the sick in their own homes. You know that when the Blessed Sacrament is taken to the sick as it should be done, the priest walks bareheaded, a canopy is carried over him, a cross precedes him with lights, and a bell is rung. Every one kneels; a Catholic king would get out of his carriage and kneel too. People turn and follow to the door of the sick man's house, then return following the Blessed Sacrament back to the church, the priest giving them his blessing, as a Benediction, before our Lord is replaced in the Tabernacle. In this country, and I am sorry to say in almost all so-called Catholic countries too, the Blessed Sacrament has in our days to be carried in secret. But for that very reason, as no respect is shown to our Lord as He passes along the street, you should honour Him all the more when He comes to your house. I have been shocked sometimes at finding no preparation made for Him, or so dirty a cloth put on the table that I was ashamed to spread the linen corporal on it. On the other hand, when people are once instructed, they delight to do all they can to honour our Lord. I remember attending a little boy who was dying, and instructed him for what I felt sure would be his first and last Communion. I spoke to his poor mother, who

had been deserted by a heartless husband, and said, "Make your room as tidy and clean as possible, so that your boy may understand better that it is indeed Jesus Christ who is coming." When I arrived, I found the five flights of stone stairs up which I was to carry the Blessed Sacrament, washed spotlessly clean. When I got to the room it looked so changed that at first I feared I had made a mistake. The walls were freshly whitened, the curtains washed, the floor as neat as possible. There was a table with a white cloth, a crucifix, candles and flowers, like a little altar. The boy had on a clean night-shirt, and as I drew near, never thinking that the dying child could move off his back, he rose in his bed and knelt. I have never forgotten the joy of giving that child Holy Communion.

Let me, in conclusion, tell you a story, showing how God blesses those who go to Mass. I knew a woman who was dirty and slatternly ; still she came to Mass every morning. One Saturday, as I was passing her house, she caught me at the door, drew me in, and pointing to her husband, sitting all sooty in his foundry clothes, she asked, "Your Reverence, is that man bound to go to Mass to-morrow in those clothes ? He has other clothes, but one of our boys (they had five) is sick, and to pay the doctor he had to pawn his



clothes. Is he bound to go to Mass in those clothes?" I said, "I don't know." The two looked at me in blank astonishment. I went on, "All I know is, he is bound to go if it's not a great inconvenience for him to go, and he must judge of that. Our bishop told me that he had Mass on a Sunday morning at seven o'clock for those who had only bad clothes. At seven o'clock on a Sunday morning there is no one in the street but the people going to Mass. If your husband can say that it's a great inconvenience for him to go to Mass in those clothes at seven o'clock, he needn't go." They still looked discontented, so I said, "One thing more I will add : if he wants to be sure and please God, he'll go." The next morning, when I went into the church to say my Mass, there I saw the man kneeling on the floor in his foundry clothes. I left the town, but returned after a few years. On Sunday I went to the new chapel to see how it filled, and there again I saw my friend, well dressed, with a young lad, also well dressed, by his side. They were appointed by the priest to receive the money for the sittings as the people came into the church. God had blessed the man ; by that time the elder boys had begun to work, and God prospered them too.

May God ever bless you, my dear friends, as



you come and share in the adorable sacrifice. It has been a great consolation to me while I have been giving these instructions to have heard from your parish priest that the attendance at Mass on Sundays and on week-days has been better. I trust that it may go on steadily improving, and that none of you may ever grieve the Sacred Heart of Jesus by missing Mass. You never will if you really understand what this sacrifice is. It is impossible to make any one really know what Mass is by merely talking about it—we must take part in it. Then we find that there is always more and more to know, to wonder at, and to love.

Further, as we get to know more about the offering ever going on in the Sacred Heart, the same offering as when our Lord instituted the sacrifice, as when He was on the Cross, when we think how much He loves us, and how He offers Himself for us, then we cannot help offering ourselves with Him. Our hearts are drawn into His Heart and become inflamed with the fire of His love; and as He died on the Cross for the love of us, so we get to love the Cross for the love of Him, and learn to take it up daily. Through the Cross we shall win our crown, and reign with Him for ever in the kingdom of His love.

"Well," said George, after a moment's silence, "I hope to go to Mass regularly every day of my life. I have been going for the last week, and every time I go I seem to understand better and better. When do you think that I may be received into the Church, Father Russell?"

"I think in two or three weeks. I want you to be thoroughly well instructed first."

"Then couldn't Father Eskdale come back after the mission, and receive me?"

"To be sure he could. He will need a week's rest."

"I am sorry that can't be," said Father Eskdale; "though I'm glad too. I have had news from abroad to-day. My father is dying, but he has been received into the Church, and my sister Peggy, who is so fond of the poor, has been a Catholic, I find, for the last three weeks. I hope my mother will come too. I may get a telegram telling me to start at once. I am sure that every one of you will pray for my father and mother and all my people."

"We'll pray, Father Eskdale, with all our hearts," said George. "We are bound to pray for our benefactors."

"God bless you all," said Father Eskdale. They knelt as he made the sign of the Cross over them.





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